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Anonymity : an enquiry.

BY E. M. FORSTER.

DO you like to know who a book's by ?

The question is more profound and even more literary than may appear. A poem for example : do we gain more or less pleasure from it when we know the name of the poet ? The *Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens*, for example. No one knows who wrote *Sir Patrick Spens*. It comes to us out of the northern void like a breath of ice. Set beside it another ballad whose author is known—*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. That, too, contains a tragic voyage and the breath of ice, but it is signed Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and we know a certain amount about this Coleridge. Coleridge signed other poems and knew other poets ; he ran away from Cambridge ; he enlisted as a Dragoon under the name of Trooper Comberback, but fell so constantly from his horse that it had to be withdrawn from beneath him permanently ; he was employed instead upon matters relating to sanitation ; he married Southey's sister, and gave lectures ; he became stout, pious and dishonest, took opium and died. With such information in our heads, we speak of the *Ancient Mariner* as "a poem by Coleridge," but of *Sir Patrick Spens* as "a poem." What difference, if any, does this difference between them make upon our minds ? And in the case of novels and plays —does ignorance or knowledge of their authorship signify ? And newspaper articles—do they impress more when they are

signed or unsigned? Thus—rather vaguely—let us begin our quest.

Books are composed of words, and words have two functions to perform: they give information or they create an atmosphere. Often they do both, for the two functions are not incompatible, but our enquiry shall keep them distinct. Let us turn for our next example to Public Notices. There is a word that is sometimes hung up at the edge of a tramline: the word "Stop." Written on a metal label by the side of the line, it means that a tram should stop here presently. It is an example of pure information. It creates no atmosphere—at least, not in my mind. I stand close to the label and wait and wait for the tram. If the tram comes, the information is correct; if it doesn't come, the information is incorrect; but in either case it remains information, and the notice is an excellent instance of one of the uses of words.

Compare it with another public notice which is sometimes exhibited in the darker cities of England: "Beware of pickpockets, male and female." Here, again, there is information. A pickpocket may come along presently, just like a tram, and we take our measures accordingly. But there is something else besides. Atmosphere is created. Who can see those words without a slight sinking feeling at the heart? All the people around look so honest and nice, but they are not, some of them are pickpockets, male or female. They hustle old gentlemen, the old gentleman glances down, his watch is gone. They steal up behind an old lady and cut out the back breadth of her beautiful sealskin jacket with sharp and noiseless pairs of scissors. Observe that happy little child running to buy sweets. Why does he suddenly burst into tears? A pickpocket, male or female, has jerked his halfpenny out of his hand. All this, and perhaps much more, occurs to us when we read the notice in question. We suspect our fellows of dishonesty, we observe them suspecting us. We have been reminded of several disquieting truths, of the general insecurity of life, human frailty, the violence of the poor, and the fatuous trustfulness of the rich, who always expect to be popular without having done anything to deserve it. It is a sort of *memento mori*, set up in the midst of Vanity Fair. By taking the form of a warning it has made us afraid, although

nothing is gained by fear; all we need to do is to protect our precious purses, and fear will not help us to do this. Besides conveying information it has created an atmosphere, and to that extent it is literature. "Beware of pickpockets, male and female," is not good literature, and it is unconscious. But the words are performing two functions, whereas the word "Stop" only performed one, and this is an important difference, and the first step in our journey.

Next step. Let us now collect together all the printed matter of the world into a single heap; poetry books, exercise books, plays, newspapers, advertisements, street notices, everything. Let us arrange the contents of the heap into a line, with the works that convey pure information at one end, and the works that create pure atmosphere at the other end, and the works that do both in their intermediate positions, the whole line being graded so that we pass from one attitude to another. We shall find that at the end of pure information stands the tramway notice "Stop," and that at the extreme other end is lyric poetry. Lyric poetry is absolutely no use. It is the exact antithesis of a street notice, for it conveys no information of any kind. What's the use of "A slumber did my spirit seal" or "Whether on Ida's snowy brow" or "So we'll go no more a roving" or "Far in a western brookland"? They do not tell us where the tram will stop or even whether it exists. And, passing from lyric poetry to ballad, we are still deprived of information. It is true that the *Ancient Mariner* describes an antarctic expedition, but in such a muddled way that it is no real help to the explorer, the accounts of the polar currents and winds being hopelessly inaccurate. It is true that the *Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens* refers to the bringing home of the Maid of Norway in the year 1285, but the reference is so vague and confused that historians turn from it in despair. Lyric poetry is absolutely no use, and poetry generally is almost no use.

But when, proceeding down the line, we leave poetry behind and arrive at the drama, and particularly at those plays that purport to contain normal human beings, we find a change. Uselessness still predominates, but we begin to get information as well. *Julius Cæsar* contains some reliable information about Rome. And when we pass from the drama to the novel

the change is still more marked. Information abounds. What a lot we learn from *Tom Jones* about the west countryside ! And from *Northanger Abbey* about the same countryside fifty years later. In psychology too the novelist teaches us much. How carefully has Henry James explored certain selected recesses of the human mind ! What an analysis of a country rectory in *The Way of All Flesh* ! The instincts of Emily Brontë—they illuminate passion. And Proust—how amazingly does Proust describe not only French Society, not only the working of his characters, but the personal equipment of the reader, so that one keeps stopping with a gasp to say " Oh ! how did he find that out about me ? I didn't even know it myself until he informed me, but it is so ! " The novel, whatever else it may be, is partly a notice board. And that is why many men who do not care for poetry or even for the drama enjoy novels and are well qualified to criticise them.

Beyond the novel we come to works whose avowed aim is information, works of learning, history, sociology, philosophy, psychology, science, etc. Uselessness is now subsidiary, though it still may persist as it does in the *Decline and Fall* or the *Stones of Venice*. And next come those works that give, or profess to give us, information about contemporary events : the newspapers. (Newspapers are so important and so peculiar that I shall return to them later, but mention them here in their place in the procession of printed matter.) And then come advertisements, time tables, the price list inside a taxi, and public notices : the notice warning us against pickpockets, which incidentally produced an atmosphere though its aim was information, and the pure information contained in the announcement " Stop." It is a long journey from lyric poetry to a placard beside a tram line, but it is a journey in which there are no breaks. Words are all of one family, and do not become different because some are printed in a book and others on a metal disc. It is their functions that differentiate them. They have two functions, and the combination of those functions is infinite. If there is on earth a house with many mansions, it is the house of words.

Looking at this line of printed matter, let us again ask ourselves : Do I want to know who wrote that ? Ought it to be signed or not ? The question is becoming more interest-

ing. Clearly, in so far as words convey information, they ought to be signed. Information is supposed to be true. That is its only reason for existing, and the man who gives it ought to sign his name, so that he may be called to account if he has told a lie. When I have waited for several hours beneath the notice "Stop," I have the right to suggest that it be taken down, and I cannot do this unless I know who put it up. Make your statement, sign your name. That's common sense. But as we approach the other function of words—the creation of atmosphere—the question of signature surely loses its importance. It does not matter who wrote "A slumber did my spirit seal" because the poem itself does not matter. Ascribe it to Ella Wheeler Wilcox and the trams will run as usual. It does not matter much who wrote *Julius Cæsar* and *Tom Jones*. They contain descriptions of ancient Rome and eighteenth century England, and to that extent we wish them signed, for we can judge from the author's name whether the description is likely to be reliable; but beyond that, the guarantee of Shakespeare or Fielding might just as well be Charles Garvice's. So we come to the conclusion, firstly, that what is information ought to be signed; and, secondly, that what is not information need not be signed.

The question can now be carried a step further.

What is this element in words that is not information? I have called it "atmosphere," but it requires stricter definition than that. It resides not in any particular word, but in the order in which words are arranged—that is to say, in style. It is the power that words have to raise our emotions or quicken our blood. It is also something else, and to define that other thing would be to explain the secret of the universe. This "something else" in words is undefinable. It is their power to create not only atmosphere, but a world, which, while it lasts, seems more real and solid than this daily existence of pickpockets and trams. Before we begin to read the *Ancient Mariner* we know that the Polar Seas are not inhabited by spirits, and that if a man shoots an albatross he is not a criminal but a sportsman, and that if he stuffs the albatross afterwards he becomes a naturalist also. All this is common knowledge. But when we are reading the *Ancient Mariner*, or remembering it intensely, common knowledge disappears and uncommon

knowledge takes its place. We have entered a universe that only answers to its own laws, supports itself, internally coheres, and has a new standard of truth. Information is true if it is accurate. A poem is true if it hangs together. Information points to something else. A poem points to nothing but itself. Information is relative. A poem is absolute. The world created by words exists neither in space nor time though it has semblances of both, it is eternal and indestructible and yet its action is no stronger than a flower: it is adamant, yet it is also what one of its practitioners thought it to be, namely, the shadow of a shadow. We can best define it by negations. It is not this world, its laws are not the laws of science or logic, its conclusions not those of common sense. And it causes us to suspend our ordinary judgments.

Now comes the crucial point. While we are reading *The Ancient Mariner* we forget our astronomy and geography and daily ethics. Do we not also forget the author? Does not Samuel Taylor Coleridge, lecturer, opium eater, and dragoon, disappear with the rest of the world of information? We remember him before we begin the poem and after we finish it, but during the poem nothing exists but the poem. Consequently while we read *The Ancient Mariner* a change takes place in it. It becomes anonymous, like the *Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens*. And here is the point I would support: that all literature tends towards a condition of anonymity, and that, so far as words are creative, a signature merely distracts us from their true significance. I do not say literature "ought" not to be signed, because literature is alive, and consequently "ought" is the wrong word to use. It wants not to be signed. That puts my point. It is always tugging in that direction and saying in effect: "I, not my author, exist really." So do the trees, flowers and human beings say "I really exist, not God," and continue to say so despite the admonitions to the contrary addressed to them by clergymen and scientists. To forget its Creator is one of the functions of a Creation. To remember him is to forget the days of one's youth. Literature does not want to remember. It is alive—not in a vague complementary sense—but alive tenaciously, and it is always covering up the tracks that connect it with the laboratory.

It may here be objected that literature expresses personality, that it is the result of the author's individual outlook, that we are right in asking for his name. It is his property—he ought to have the credit.

An important objection; also a modern one, for in the past neither writers nor readers attached the high importance to personality that they do to-day. It did not trouble Homer or the various people who were Homer. It did not trouble the writers in the Greek Anthology, who would write and re-write the same poem in almost identical language, their notion being that the poem, not the poet, is the important thing, and that by continuous rehandling the perfect expression natural to the poem may be attained. It did not trouble the mediæval balladists, who, like the Cathedral builders, left their works unsigned. It troubled neither the composers nor the translators of the Bible. The Book of Genesis to-day contains at least three different elements—Jahvist, Elohist and Priestly—which were combined into a single account by a committee who lived under King Josiah at Jerusalem and translated into English by another committee who lived under King James I at London. And yet the Book of Genesis is literature. These earlier writers and readers knew that the words a man writes express him, but they did not make a cult of expression as we do to-day. Surely they were right, and modern critics go too far in their insistence on personality.

They go too far because they do not reflect what personality is. Just as words have two functions—information and creation—so each human mind has two personalities, one on the surface, one deeper down. The upper personality has a name. It is called S. T. Coleridge, or William Shakespeare, or Mrs. Humphry Ward. It is conscious and alert, it does things like dining out, answering letters, etc., and it differs vividly and amusingly from other personalities. The lower personality is a very queer affair. In many ways it is a perfect fool, but without it there is no literature, because, unless a man dips a bucket down into it occasionally he cannot produce first-class work. There is something general about it. Although it is inside S. T. Coleridge, it cannot be labelled with his name. It has something in common with all other deeper personalities, and the mystic will assert that the common quality is God,

and that here, in the obscure recesses of our being, we near the gates of the Divine. It is in any case the force that makes for anonymity. As it came from the depths, so it soars to the heights, out of local questionings ; as it is general to all men, so the works it inspires have something general about them, namely beauty. The poet wrote the poem no doubt, but he forgot himself while he wrote it, and we forget him while we read. What is so wonderful about great literature is that it transforms the man who reads it towards the condition of the man who wrote, and brings to birth in us also the creative impulse. Lost in the beauty where he was lost, we find more than we ever threw away, we reach what seems to be our spiritual home, and remember that it was not the speaker who was in the beginning but the Word.

If we glance at one or two writers who are not first class this point will be illustrated. Charles Lamb and R. L. Stevenson will serve. Here are two gifted, sensitive, fanciful, tolerant, humorous fellows, but they always write with their surface-personalities and never let down buckets into their underworld. Lamb did not try : bbbbuckets, he would have said, are bbeyond me, and he is the pleasanter writer in consequence. Stevenson was always trying oh ever so hard, but the bucket either stuck or else came up again full of the R.L.S. who let it down full of the mannerisms, the self-consciousness, the sentimentality, the quaintness which he was hoping to avoid. He and Lamb append their names in full to every sentence they write. They pursue us page after page, always to the exclusion of higher joy. They are letter writers, not creative artists, and it is no coincidence that each of them did write charming letters. A letter comes off the surface : it deals with the events of the day or with plans : it is naturally signed. Literature tries to be unsigned. And the proof is that, whereas we are always exclaiming " How like Lamb ! " or " How typical of Stevenson ! " we never say " How like Shakespeare ! " or " How typical of Dante ! " We are conscious only of the world they have created, and we are in a sense co-partners in it. Coleridge, in his smaller domain, makes us co-partners too. We forget for ten minutes his name and our own, and I contend that this temporary forgetfulness, this momentary and mutual anonymity, is sure evidence of good

stuff. The demand that literature should express personality is far too insistent in these days, and I look back with longing to the earlier modes of criticism where a poem was not an expression but a discovery, and was sometimes supposed to have been shown to the poet by God.

" Explique moi d'où vient ce souffle par ta bouche façonné en mots.
Car quand tu parles, comme un arbre qui de toute sa feuille
S'émeut dans le silence du Midi, la paix en nous peu à peu succède à la pensée.
Par le moyen de ce chant sans musique et de cette parole sans voix, nous sommes accordés à la mélodie de ce monde.
Tu n'explique rien, ô poête, mais toutes choses par toi nous deviennent explicables."

" Je ne parle pas selon ce que je veux, mais je conçois dans le sommeil,
Et je ne saurais expliquer, d'où je retire ce souffle, c'est le souffle qui m'est retiré.
Dilatant ce vide que j'ai en moi, j'ouvre la bouche,
Et ayant aspiré l'air, dans ce legs de lui même par lequel l'homme à chaque seconde *expire* l'image de sa mort,
Je restitue une parole intelligible,
Et l'ayant dite, je sais ce que j'ai dit." *

The personality of a writer does become important after we have read his book and begin to study it. When the glamour of creation ceases, when the leaves of the divine tree are silent, when the intelligible word is restored to the universe, when the co-partnership is over, then a book changes its nature, and we can ask ourselves questions about it such as " What is the author's name ? " " Where did he live ? " " Was he married ? " and " Which was his favourite flower ? " Then we are no longer reading the book, we are studying it and making it subserve our desire for information. " Study " has a very solemn sound. " I am studying Dante " sounds much more than " I am reading Dante." It is really much less. Study is only a serious form of gossip. It teaches us everything about the book except the central thing, and between that and us it raises a circular barrier which only the wings of the spirit can cross. The study of science, history, etc., is necessary and proper, for they are subjects that belong to the domain of information, but a creative subject like literature—to study that is excessively dangerous, and should never be attempted by the immature. Modern education promotes the unmitigated study of literature and concentrates our attention on the relation between a writer's life—his surface

* Claudel : *La Ville* (second version).

life—and his work. That is one reason why it is such a curse. There are no questions to be asked about literature while we read it because "la paix succède à la pensée." An examination paper could not be set on the *Ancient Mariner* as it speaks to the heart of the reader, and it was to speak to the heart that it was written, and otherwise it would not have been written. Questions only occur when we cease to realise what it was about and become inquisitive and methodical.

A word in conclusion on the newspapers—for they raise an interesting contributory issue. We have already defined a newspaper as something which conveys, or is supposed to convey, information about passing events. It is true, not to itself like a poem, but to the facts it purports to relate—like the tram notice. When the morning paper arrives it lies upon the breakfast table simply steaming with truth in regard to something else. Truth, truth, and nothing but truth. Unsated by the banquet, we sally forth in the afternoon to buy an evening paper, which is published at mid-day as the name implies, and feast anew. At the end of the week we buy a weekly, or a Sunday, paper, which as the name implies has been written on the Saturday, and at the end of the month we buy a monthly. Thus do we keep in touch with the world of events as practical men should.

And who is keeping us in touch? Who gives us this information upon which our judgments depend, and which must ultimately influence our characters? Curious to relate, we seldom know. Newspapers are for the most part anonymous. Statements are made and no signature appended. Suppose we read in a paper that the Emperor of Guatemala is dead. Our first feeling is one of mild consternation; out of snobbery we regret what has happened, although the Emperor didn't play much part in our lives, and if ladies we say to one another "I feel so sorry for the poor Empress." But presently we learn that the Emperor cannot have died, because Guatemala is a Republic, and the Empress cannot be a widow, because she does not exist. If the statement was signed, and we know the name of the goose who made it, we shall discount anything he tells us in the future. If—which is more probable—it is unsigned or signed "Our Special Correspondent"—we remain defenceless against future mis-

statements. The Guatemala lad may be turned on to write about the Fall of the Franc and mislead us over that.

It seems paradoxical that an article should impress us more if it is unsigned than if it is signed. But it does, owing to the weakness of our psychology. Anonymous statements have, as we have seen, a universal air about them. Absolute truth, the collected wisdom of the universe, seems to be speaking, not the feeble voice of a man. The modern newspaper has taken advantage of this. It is a pernicious caricature of literature. It has usurped that divine tendency towards anonymity. It has claimed for information what only belongs to creation. And it will claim it as long as we allow it to claim it, and to exploit the defects of our psychology. " The High Mission of the Press." Poor Press ! as if it were in a position to have a mission ! It is we who have a mission to it. To cure a man through the newspapers or through propaganda of any sort is impossible : you merely alter the symptoms of his disease. We shall only be cured by purging our minds of confusion. The papers trick us not so much by their lies as by their exploitation of our weakness. They are always confusing the two functions of words and insinuating that " The Emperor of Guatemala is dead " and " A slumber did my spirit seal " belong to the same category. They are always usurping the privileges that only uselessness may claim, and they will do this as long as we allow them to do it.

This ends our enquiry. The question " Ought things to be signed ? " seemed, if not an easy question, at all events an isolated one, but we could not answer it without considering what words are, and disentangling the two functions they perform. We decided pretty easily that information ought to be signed : common sense leads to this conclusion, and newspapers which are largely unsigned have gained by that device their undesirable influence over civilisation. Creation—that we found a more difficult matter. " Literature wants not to be signed " I suggested. Creation comes from the depths—the mystic will say from God. The signature, the name, belongs to the surface-personality, and pertains to the world of information, it is a ticket, not the spirit of life. While the author wrote he forgot his name ; while we read him we forget both his name and our own. When we have finished reading we

begin to ask questions, and to study the book and the author, we drag them into the realm of information. Now we learn a thousand things, but we have lost the pearl of great price, and in the chatter of question and answer, in the torrents of gossip and examination papers we forget the purpose for which creation was performed. I am not asking for reverence. Reverence is fatal to literature. My plea is for something more vital: imagination. Imagination is as the immortal God which should assume flesh for the redemption of mortal passion (Shelley). Imagination is our only guide into the world created by words. Whether those words are signed or unsigned becomes, as soon as the imagination redeems us, a matter of no importance, because we have approximated to the state in which they were written, and there are no names down there, no personality as we understand personality, no marrying or giving in marriage. What there is down there —ah, that is another enquiry, and may the clergymen and the scientists pursue it more successfully in the future than they have in the past.

From *Marigold.*

An Idyll of the Sea in Ten Cantos.

By W. J. TURNER.

Canto 5.

It was late afternoon of the next day
When Marigold came round the little bay
And as she turned the last street she could see
The ancient sailor sitting on the quay
And pouring tea into a pannikin
" You'll find your tea tastes better in a tin "—
He offered her a mug so bright and new
It shone like silver : " You see very few
Tin mugs like this, it's all enamelled ware
That chips and fouls, but no one seems to care—
Which shows a sloppy lack of sensitiveness
In what folk touch and see. Its physical dress
Is all the spiritual universe we know
And I judge all things by their outward show.
Most people think that superficial, but
To me it's quite plain why—their eyes are blind or shut ! "
Marigold, noticing that there were three
Tin mugs, was wondering who the third would be ;
But no one came and soon she quite forgot
This fact absorbed in talking. She had not
In her short lifetime met the type of mind
Unlike a crow that walks in a furrow behind
Some ploughing ox, but ever on wavering pinion
Like a gull wanders in the imagination—
Now dipping low, now soaring swiftly high
Upon some business hidden from earthly eye.
And soon they grew so intimate that he
Suddenly stopped and gazing at her sadly
Said :

" When I look at you I think of all
The flowering beauty that must wasting fall,
How lavish seems the earth, how prodigal,
Making no apt provision for our needs
Scattering mere vain profusion of her seeds.
We know so many barren bitter years,
Starving mid splendour and beset with fears,
That the deep inland waters of our nature
Shall never see the sail of living creature.
They are so fair, so bright, those quiet lagoons
And month by month how many lovely moons
Arise and sink there, by no human eye
Welcomed, and in that passionate secret sky
How many storms have faded tranquilly
Leaving the sun shining and solitary.
In youth we think that every acorn lives,
Grows up an oak, magnificently gives
Itself to light and air and takes its stand
Joyfully with all others in the land.
What melancholy fills us as we go
Later through woods—sad cemeteries, we know.
Unnumbered ghosts fall lifeless to the ground,
Ghosts that neither shadow have nor sound
And if they had so much as a thin cloak
About their hollowness, the air would choke
Solid with darkness. There would be no light
No sun, no shade, only eternal night.
But still this phantom cornucopia showers
Its false abundance, false since its not ours,
And who may find amidst its glittering fire
The salamander of his heart's desire ?
They say that nothing vanishes, it changes
And still lives on, yet even mountain ranges
Seen distantly at sea have a location,
And there's a map in every skeleton
Of country elsewhere mapless and unknown.
Not a wind blows as it has always blown.
Mere apparitions these, fantastic show,
The cloud in *Hamlet*, that gigantic shadow
Of scheming minds ? Why do men seek to know

The Dinosaur's egg ? It will not even hatch out
Life's wavering wings—the absolute, no doubt !
Truly the Dinosaur lives here, curled up, dead,
And we'll accept no other stone instead.
Do men search deserts for a pure abstraction ?
Abstractions die, and have no resurrection.
How many dead ideas, dinosaur's eggs
Have led men tottering to wear out their legs !
But shall we think that these pursuits are vain ?
Vain thought, since straightway we shall seek again
To make the relic immortal in a thought
Which dies immediately it can be taught.
Yes, thought dies ; like the meteor's shining light
It is brief incandescence, the body's flight
From day into imagination's night.
Who seeks in ink to draw its vanished track
Is merely blotting out white blanks with black.
Yet no man lives for ever on his back,
So the astronomer recumbent flies
Through darkness shooting his illumined eyes.
One night of meteors makes a generation—
The art and culture of a vanished nation ;
Let men search deserts for that pure abstraction,
A broken teapot awaits resurrection :
Let them with care, and reverently, bring
That relic in, it is a holy thing !
As in that egg a dinosaur, a world,
A stellar universe lies neatly curled
In final sleep, so here a ghost is laid
Which we turn safely over with a spade.
But yet, beware, a man may love a ghost
And raise from earth what seemed for ever lost."
The old man stopped. And suddenly there came
Climbing the quay, the same, the very same
Young man, The Spanish Sailor. Marigold stared
Amazed at such a likeness. Unprepared
She put her hand up to her heart, and he
Startled, gazed wonderingly at her rare beauty
Then shyly dropped his eyes and took his tea.

Canto 8.

Marigold in that simplicity
Which comes from mind and flesh in harmony
In spite of natural hesitations, fears,
Counsels of prudence, safety, even tears
At the cessation of her life's dull past,
Smiling when she reflected how aghast
Her outraged family would pretend to be,
Resolved to start her new life from the day
Her lover was to sail, since no delay
Was possible to him, he had his post
By a fixed date off the Moroccan coast.
Packing her trunk with all she thought she'd need,
Rapturously happy now that she was freed,
She from the circumference of life's wheel untied
Steps like a slave in fearful joy to guide
Henceforth her path in the unguessed unknown
Where a false turn will send her tumbling down.
Let him who will sleep in the peace of death,
Securely every morning draw his breath,
Know the whole livelong day like an old song
(" Was that three struck ? God, the day is long.")
At his club window safely survey the battle
Or at his clerk's desk hear, far-off, the rattle,
The dreadful thunder and heartquake of change.
His is a quiet, comfortable range
Over a field of many little pleasures
But he who, restless, seeks life's rarer treasures,
In stony deserts gathering prickly pears
Will spend his life and water his bed with tears.
And watching him there's none who understands
Why he should stumble on with bleeding hands,
Barked shins, cracked skull, worn clothes and empty pockets
Staring as if blank skies were full of golden rockets.
Less than a fortnight from that first day's tea
Marigold and her lover put to sea ;
Barred high with mackerel clouds the day was bright.
Marigold cooked their meals, and still in sight

Of the fast fading coast they sat on deck
Until at last around them was no speck
Of land or life, only the waters moved
Unceasingly ; unceasingly they loved.
And when night came they both lay down together
Into the calm sky like a moulted feather
Floated the new moon. Held within their arms
Love like summer lightning strikes and calms
Until, the irradiant violence passed away,
Asleep in bright still limbs the lovers lay.
When morning dawned the sky was overcast
The air was warm. As in a dream they passed
The daytime busying with mere trivial things
Till night should come again, dark night that brings
Bright storms of melancholy on passion's wings,
Bright storms in which are born earth's loveliest creatures
Beings so rare their legendary lives and features
Stamp on the race's sleeping imagination
Ecstasy haunting many a generation.
Who in that brief two nights they did conceive
Did not on earth a human form achieve,
For that last night when deep in love they lay
A sudden storm blew wildly across the bay
Tore out the mast (the little craft sank down)
And then died out as though the spot was known.

Canto 9.

There where the smooth Atlantic current streams
On a sunk beach the great god Neptune dreams
But in his dream who is this staggering in,
That on his shoulders bears a burden twin ?
With reverent care he lays the lovers down,
Stands motionless regarding with a frown
Their naked bodies pitifully white
In the translucent shadowless green light.
The Ancient Sailor, for this ghost is he,
Then lifts his eyes and Neptune shudderingly
Starts in his dream, the words without a sound
In livid lightning lie unsealed around :

Thou puppet from thy trembling throne look down!
Here lie two lovers whom thy slaves did drown
And with them hidden such a jewel lies
As would have plucked a Shadow from earth's skies.
But thou because thou art too old a king
And indiscriminately strike at anything,
Must now give up thy sceptre unto me;
A wraith-like memory, thou shalt haunt the sea,
And where thou once did reign now a mere ghost
At spectral banquets evermore shall feast,
To mummery thy feeble wits decline.
Wherefore, great adversary, let this fate be thine.
With shades to luncheon and with ghosts to dine.
These words the sea-king saw with glazing eyes,
Their faded blue's last ebbing lustre dies,
Out through the lucent gloom its flickering glimmer flies.
Slowly the splendour of a new god falls,
Into the calm of those translucent halls
And, where the lovers lie their limbs entwined and cold,
Lights that dead orb the sun's dark marigold.

The Red Book

By LUIGI PIRANDELLO.

NISIA. A populous township crowding along a strip of shore by the African Sea.

Accidents of birth are a privilege not confined to the human race. A town also is not born as or where it chooses, but on the spot where from some natural necessity the life force presses. And if too many people, attracted by the said necessity, collect on that spot, and too many more are born there, and the area is too small, inevitably the town must thrive badly.

Nisia, if it wished to grow, was obliged to pile itself up, one house above another, against the sheer limestone wall of the overhanging tableland, which, a little way beyond the town, towers forbiddingly over the sea. It might have spread itself freely over this vast and breezy plain; but it must then have withdrawn itself from the shore. Perhaps a stray house, planted of necessity up above, might one fine day, bonneted with its tiled roof and wrapped in its shawl of whitewash, have been seen to come scrambling down to the shore. For here, on the shore, is life.

On the plain the folk of Nisia have placed their cemetery. The breathing space is up there, for the dead.

"Up there we shall have room to breathe," say the folk of Nisia.

And they say this because down below, on the shore, one has no room to breathe; amid the tumultuous, dusty traffic of sulphur, coal, timber, grain and salt meat, one has no room to breathe. If they wish to breathe, they must go up above; they go there when they are dead, and imagine that, after death, they will breathe there.

It is some consolation.

* * * *

One must make every allowance for the inhabitants of Nisia, because it is not very easy to be honest when one is not well off.

There broods over those packed houses, dens rather than houses, a depressing stench, damp and acrid, which sooner or later corrupts every virtue. There join in this corruption of virtue (that is to say, they increase the stench) the little pig and the hens, and, not infrequently, a stamping donkey or two as well. The smoke finds no outlet and grows stale in these dens, blackening walls and ceilings. And what wry looks of disgust from the grimy prints of the patron saints that hang on those walls!

The men feel it less, herded like beasts as they are all day on the shore or on board the ships; the women, they feel it; and are almost driven mad by it, and it seems that they find a relief from this madness of theirs principally in having babies. What a quantity they have! Twelve in one house, fourteen in another, sixteen in a third. . . . It is true that after having them they do not succeed in rearing more than three or four. But those that die in the cradle help the three or four that survive (whether more or less fortunate than themselves, one cannot say); since every woman, immediately after the death of one of these babies, hurries to the foundling hospital and takes another from there, equipped with a little red book which for several years to come is worth six lire to her a month.

All the dealers in linen and other clothes in Nisia are Maltese. Even if they were born in Sicily they are still Maltese. "Going to the Maltese" means at Nisia going to buy linen. And the Maltese, armed with yard-measures, do good business at Nisia; they speculate in these little red books, for each book they supply goods to the value of 200 lire; a bride's outfit. The girls of Nisia all marry in this way, with the little red books of the foundlings, whom their mothers are expected to supply with milk in exchange.

It is a fine sight, at the end of each month, the procession of plump, silent Maltese, in embroidered slippers and black silk caps, a big blue handkerchief in one hand and in the other a silver-mounted bone snuffbox, making their way to the Council Chambers at Nisia, each with seven or ten or fifteen of these little red nursing books. They sit in a row upon the bench in the long dusty corridor from which a pigeonhole opens into the collector's office, and each of them waits his turn, taking a peaceful nap, or a pinch of snuff, or, ever so gently, brushing

away the flies. The payment of the nursing money to the Maltese has long been a tradition at Nisia.

"Marenga, Rosa!" shouts the collector.

"Present" replies the Maltese.

* * * *

Marenga Rosa De Nicolao is a byword in the Council Chambers at Nisia. For more than twenty years she has fed the usury of the Maltese with an almost unbroken series of these little red books.

How many of her children have died in infancy? Not even she could tell you. She has brought up four, all girls. Three she has married off already. Now she has the fourth engaged.

But no one knows now whether she is a woman still or a wrung clout. So that the Maltese, to whom she had recourse for her three elder daughters, have refused to give her credit for this youngest one.

"'Gnora Rosilla, you can't nurse them."

"I? I can't nurse them, can't I?"

She feels the insult to her dignity as an animal good for all these years for breeding and giving milk, and, as one cannot argue with the taciturn Maltese, screams furiously outside their shops.

If at the hospital they have entrusted her with a foundling, is not that a proof that they have seen in her the capacity to rear it?

But at this argument the Maltese, in the shade behind their shop counters, merely smile under their noses, and nod their heads.

It might be supposed that they have no great confidence in the doctor or in the parish assessor, whose duty it is to watch over the welfare of the foundlings from the hospital. But that is not the case. The Maltese know that in the eyes of the said doctor and assessor the responsibility of a mother who has to marry her daughter, and has no other means of doing so than a little red book, is far more serious and deserves greater consideration than the responsibility of bringing up a foundling; for, if a foundling dies, who is any the worse? Does anyone mourn for it, or feel sorrow? A daughter is a daughter; a foundling is a foundling. And if the daughter does not marry, there is the risk that she too may take to increasing the

number of foundlings, for whom the Council will then have to provide.

If, however, for the Council the death of a foundling is a stroke of good luck, for the Maltese it is at the very least bad business, even if he succeeds in recovering the goods he has advanced. It is not unusual, therefore, at certain hours of the day, for the Maltese to make tours of inspection, under cover of taking the air, along those grimy alleys swarming with naked, earthy, sun-baked children, with lime-encrusted pigs and hens, in which from doorstep to doorstep gossip, or more often squabble, all these foster-mothers of the little red books.

The Maltese take the same care of the foundlings as the women take of the little pigs.

Now and then a Maltese, in a moment of panic, has been known to give a foundling that was wasting away a supply of milk from his own wife for half an hour daily.

But that will do . . . Rosa Marenga has at length found a Maltese of an inferior class, a young Maltese, a beginner in the business, who has promised to give her, by instalments, not, as is customary, two hundred lire worth of goods, but one hundred and forty. The daughter's intended and his family are satisfied with this, and have fixed the date for the wedding.

And now the famished foundling, cradled in a sort of sack suspended by two ropes in a corner of the den, cries from morning to night, and Tuzza, Rosa Marenga's engaged daughter, makes love, talks to her sweetheart, stitches at her trousseau, and, now and again, pulls the string attached to this primitive cradle and sets it rocking :

" There, my bonny, there ! Holy Mother, what a little 'retic it is ! "

'Retic is short for heretic, and means restless, irritable, troublesome, discontented. It must be admitted that this is a mild way, for Christian folk, of judging heretics. A few drops of milk, and the child would immediately turn Christian ! But she has so little now, Mamma Rosa, of that milk . . .

Tuzza must indeed resign herself to going to her wedding to the tune of these despairing cries. If she had not had to marry, this time Mamma Rosa, in all conscience, would not have taken a foundling from the hospital. She has taken it for her ; the child cries for her, so that she may make love.

And the power of love is such that it turns her deaf to the cries of the starving child.

Her sweetheart, moreoever, who is a dock labourer, comes in the evening, when work in the harbour is finished ; and, if the evening is fine, mother, daughter, and sweetheart go up to the plain for a mouthful of fresh air by moonlight ; and the orphan is left to cry alone in the dark, locked in the den, hanging in its kind of cradle. The neighbours hear it, with anger and with sorrow, and taking compassion on it, are all agreed in wishing it an early death. They positively take one's breath away, those never-ending wails.

Finally the little pig is disturbed, and snorts and grunts, and uneasiness spreads, where they huddle beneath the oven, among the hens.

What are they muttering to themselves, those hens ?

Each of them has been a mother and has felt the agony in her time of hearing herself called from afar by a straying chick. Flapping her wings, scurrying to and fro with every point of her comb erect, she has no rest until she has found it. Now why in the world does not the mother of this little one, who evidently must have strayed also, come running at the sound of these despairing cries ?

The hens are so stupid that they sit upon eggs that have been laid by other hens, and when from those eggs chickens are hatched that are not theirs they cannot distinguish them from the chickens hatched from their own eggs but rear them with the same loving care. They do not know either that for human chickens the warmth of a mother's breast is not enough, but milk also is needed. The little pig knows this, who has been in need of milk too himself and has had it, oh yes, has had it in abundance because his mother, although only a sow, gave it to him night and day with all her heart, as much as he wanted. And so he cannot conceive that anyone can be crying like that for want of milk, and wandering round the dark den protests with his gluttonous grunts against the little one hanging in the cradle, a 'retic in his eyes also.

There, little one, let the fat pig sleep, he is tired ; let the hens sleep, and the neighbours. You may be certain that Mamma Rosa would give you milk if she had any, but she has none. If your real mother has felt no pity for you, the mother

you never knew, how can you expect her to have any, who must feel it rather for her own daughter? Let her breathe a little fresh air up above after a long day of hard work, and rejoice in the happiness of her amorous daughter, who is strolling in the moonlight, on the arm of her betrothed. If you only knew what a veil of light, sparkling with dew and musical with silvery warblings, the moon spreads out on the ground up there! And there blossoms of its own accord in that delicious fairy-land a heartfelt longing to be good. Tuzza is promising in her heart of hearts that she will be a loving mother to her own babies.

There, poor little one, make yourself a comforter of one of your tiny fingers, and suck that instead, and go to sleep! A tiny finger? Oh, good heavens, what have you been doing? The thumb on your left hand has grown so huge that you can hardly squeeze it into your mouth! The only huge thing, that thumb, on the dainty little hand, so cold and shrunken; the only huge thing on the whole of your tiny body. With that thumb in your mouth, you have sucked all the rest of yourself away, and left nothing but the skin to cover your little skeleton. How, where do you find the strength in yourself to go on crying so?

* * * *

A miracle. Returning from their moonlit walk, mother, daughter and sweetheart find, one evening, the den plunged in silence.

"Hush, for goodness sake!" the mother warns the young couple, who would like to linger awhile and talk outside the door.

And hush they do; but Tuzza cannot keep back a ripple of laughter at the words which her sweetheart is whispering in her ear. Words, are they, or kisses? It is not easy to see, in the dark.

Mamma Rosa has gone into the den; she crosses to the cradle and listens. Silence. A ray of moonshine has come stealing in through the open door and flits along the ground like a ghost, in the darkness, in beneath the oven, where the hens are roosting. One of them is disturbed, and clucks quietly to herself. Devil take her! And devil take the old man too, who comes home, drunk as usual, from the tavern and stumbles in the doorway, trying to avoid the lovers.

But what is this ? The child does not wake for any sound, and yet its sleep is so light that the passing of a fly is enough to awaken it. Mamma Rosa is alarmed ; she lights the lamp ; looks in the cradle ; cautiously stretches out a hand to touch the child's brow, and gives a sudden scream.

Tuzza comes running, but her sweetheart remains outside the door, puzzled and apprehensive. What is Mamma Rosa shouting to him ? To come in at once and untie one of the ropes that hold up the cradle in its corner ? But why ? Come quick, quick ! She knows why, does Mamma Rosa. But the young man, as though suddenly frozen stiff by the deathly silence of the baby, is unable to move a step, stands peering in, a dim, troubled shape, from the doorway. And then Mamma Rosa, before the neighbours come running in, jumps on a chair herself, and tears at the rope, shouting to Tuzza to lay out the little body.

Such a terrible accident ! The rope has broken, no one knows how ! It has broken, and the child has fallen from the cradle and is dead. They found it lying dead, on the ground, cold and stiff ! What a terrible accident !

All night long, even when the last of the neighbours who hurried in on hearing her cries have gone back to bed in their own homes, she continues to weep and scream, and as soon as day dawns resumes the task of supplying an account of the accident to everyone that passes the door.

But how can the child have fallen ? There is not a scratch, not a scar, not a sign of injury on the little body. There is only an emaciation that turns one's blood cold, and on the left hand that finger, that huge thumb !

The doctor from the mortuary pays his visit and goes away, shrugging his shoulders and raising his eyebrows. The whole population is there to bear witness that the child died of hunger. And the sweetheart, although he knows in what a state Tuzza must be, does not show his face. There come instead, oh so coldly and quietly, pursing their lips, his mother and a married sister to witness the scene with the Maltese, the young beginner, who sweeps raging into the den to recover the goods he has advanced. Rosa Marenga shouts, tears her hair, slaps her face, lays bare her bosom to let it be seen that she still has milk, and implores his pity and mercy for her

daughter, the bride to be, begs him to allow her a respite at any rate until the evening, time to go round to the mayor, the assessor, the doctor at the foundling hospital—please, please! And away she goes, still screaming, her hair flying, her arms in the air, followed by the jeers and catcalls of the little boys.

The whole neighbourhood is in a ferment there outside the door, round the young Maltese, who has planted himself on guard over his goods, and the bridegroom's mother and sister, who are waiting to see how the matter is going to end. A charitable neighbourhood has gone into the den, and assisted by Tuzza, who is crying her eyes out, is washing and clothing the little corpse.

There is a long time to wait. The neighbours grow tired, so do the bridegroom's family, and the whole crowd disperse to their homes. Only the young Maltese stays behind on guard, irremovable.

They all come crowding round the door again, towards evening, on the arrival of the municipal hearse which is to take the little body to the cemetery.

They have already nailed it down in its little deal coffin; they are lifting it up to slide it into the hearse, when, amid shouts of amazement, and more jeers and more catcalls from the crowd, there appears in the distance, radiant and triumphant, Rose Marenga carrying on her arm another foundling.

"Look! Look!" she cries, holding it up for her daughter to see, her daughter who smiles through her tears, while the hearse moves slowly away to the cemetery.

Translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff

Art and Morality

By D. H. LAWRENCE.

IT is part of the common clap-trap that "art is immoral." Behold everywhere artists running to put on jazz underwear, to demoralise themselves; or to at least débourgeoiser themselves.

For the bourgeois is supposed to be the fount of morality. Myself, I have found artists far more morally finicky.

Anyhow, what has a water-pitcher and six insecure apples on a crumpled tablecloth got to do with bourgeois morality? Yet I notice that most people, who have not learnt the trick of being arty, feel a real moral repugnance for a Cézanne still-life. They think it is not *right*.

For them, it isn't.

Yet how can they feel, as they do, that it is subtly *immoral?*

The very same design, if it was humanised, and the tablecloth was a draped nude and the water-pitcher a nude semi-draped, weeping over the draped one, would instantly become highly moral. Why?

Perhaps from painting better than from any other art we can realise the subtlety of the distinction between what is dumbly *felt* to be moral, and what is felt to be immoral. The moral instinct in the man in the street.

But instinct is largely habit. The moral instinct of the man in the street is largely an emotional defence of an old habit.

Yet what can there be, in a Cézanne still-life, to rouse the aggressive moral instinct of the man in the street? What ancient habit in man do these six apples and a water-pitcher succeed in hindering?

A water-pitcher that isn't so very much like a water-pitcher, apples that aren't very appley, and a tablecloth that's not particularly much of a tablecloth. I could do better myself!

Probably! But then, why not dismiss the picture as a poor attempt? Whence this anger, this hostility? The derisive resentment?

Six apples, a pitcher, and a tablecloth can't suggest improper behaviour. They don't—not even to a Freudian. If they did, the man in the street would feel much more at home with them.

Where, then, does the immorality come in ? Because come in it does.

Because of a very curious habit that civilised man has been forming down the whole course of civilisation, and in which he is now hard-boiled. The slowly-formed habit of seeing just as the photographic camera sees.

You may say, the object reflected on the retina is *always* photographic. It may be. I doubt it. But whatever the image on the retina may be, it is rarely, even now, the photographic image of the object which is actually *taken in* by the man who sees the object. He does not, even now, see for himself. He sees what the Kodak has taught him to see. And man, try as he may, is not a kodak.

When a child sees a man, what does the child *take in*, as an impression ? Two eyes, a nose, a mouth of teeth, two straight legs, two straight arms ; a sort of hieroglyph which the human child has used through all the ages to represent man. At least, the old hieroglyph was still in use when I was a child.

Is this what the child actually sees ?

If you mean by seeing, consciously registering, then this is what the child actually sees. The photographic image may be there all right, upon the retina. But there the child leaves it ; outside the door, as it were.

Through many ages mankind has been striving to register the image on the retina *as it is* : no more glyphs and hieroglyphs. We'll have the real objective reality.

And we have succeeded. As soon as we succeed, the kodak is invented,to prove our success. Could lies come out of a black box, into which nothing but light had entered ? Impossible ; It takes life to tell a lie.

Colour also, which primitive man cannot really *see*, is now seen by us, and fitted to the spectrum.

Eureka ! We have seen it, with our own eyes.

When we see a red cow, we see a red cow. We are quite sure of it, because the unimpeachable kodak sees exactly the same.

But supposing we had all of us been born blind, and had to get our image of a red cow by touching her, and smelling her, hearing her moo, and "feeling" her. Whatever should we think of her? Whatever sort of image should we have of her, in our dark minds? Something very different, surely?

As vision developed towards the kodak, man's idea of himself developed towards the snapshot. Primitive man simply didn't know *what* he was: he was always half in the dark. But we have learned to see, and each of us has a complete kodak idea of himself.

You take a snap of your sweetheart, in the field among the buttercups, smiling tenderly at the red cow with a calf, and doubtless offering a cabbage-leaf.

Awfully nice, and absolutely "real." There is your sweetheart, complete in herself, enjoying a sort of absolute objective reality: complete, perfect, all her surroundings contributing to her, incontestable. She is really "a picture."

This is the habit we have formed: of visualising *everything*. Each man to himself is a picture. That is, he is a complete little objective reality, complete in himself, existing by himself, absolutely, in the middle of the picture. All the rest is just setting, background. To every man, to every woman, the universe is just a setting to the absolute little picture of himself, herself.

This has been the development of the conscious ego in man through several thousand years: since Greece first broke the spell of "darkness." Man has learnt to *see* himself. So now, he *is* what he sees. He makes himself in his own image.

Previously, even in Egypt, men had not learned to *see straight*. They fumbled in the dark, and didn't quite know where they were, or what they were. Like men in a dark room, they only *felt* their own existence surging in the darkness of other existences.

We, however, have learned to see ourselves for what we are, as the sun sees us. The kodak bears witness. We see as the All-seeing Eye sees, with the universal vision. And we *are* what is seen; each man to himself an identity, an isolated absolute, corresponding with a universe of isolated absolutes. A picture! A kodak snap, in a universal film of snaps.

We have achieved universal vision. Even God could not see

differently from what we see : only more extensively, like a telescope, or more intensively, like a microscope. But the same vision. A vision of images which are reals, and each one limited to itself.

We behave as if we had got to the bottom of the sack, and seen the Platonic Idea with our own eyes, in all its photographically-developed perfection, lying in the bottom of the sack of the universe. Our own ego !

The identifying of ourselves with the visual image of ourselves has become an instinct ; the habit is already old. The picture of me, the me that is *seen*, is me.

As soon as we are supremely satisfied about it, somebody starts to upset us. Comes Cézanne with his pitcher and his apples, which are not only not life-like, but are a living lie. The kodak will prove it.

The kodak will take all sorts of snaps, misty, atmospheric, sun-dazed, dancing—all quite different. Yet the image is *the* image. There is only more or less sun, more or less vapour, more or less light and shade.

The All-seeing Eye sees with every degree of intensity and in every possible kind of mood ; Giotto, Titian, El Greco, Turner, all so different, yet all the true image in the All-seeing Eye.

This Cézanne still-life, however, is *contrary* to the All-seeing Eye. Apples, to the eye of God, could not look like that, nor could a tablecloth, nor could a pitcher. So, it is *wrong*.

Because man, since he grew out of a personal God, has taken over to himself all the attributes of the Personal godhead. It is the all-seeing human eye which is now the Eternal Eye.

And if apples don't *look* like that, in any light or circumstance, or under any mood, then they shouldn't be painted like that.

Oh, là-là-là ! The apples *are* just like that, to me, cries Cézanne. They *are* like that, no matter what they look like.

Apples are always apples, says Vox Populi, Vox Dei.

Sometimes they're a sin, sometimes they're a knock on the head, sometimes they're a bellyache, sometimes they're part of a pie, sometimes they're sauce for the goose.—

And you can't see a bellyache, neither can you see a sin,

neither can you see a knock on the head. So paint the apple in these aspects, and you get—probably, or approximately, a Cézanne still-life.

What an apple looks like to an urchin, to a thrush, to a browsing cow, to Sir Isaac Newton, to a caterpillar, to a hornet, to a mackerel who finds one bobbing on the sea, I leave you to conjecture. But the all-seeing must have mackerel's eyes, as well as man's.

And this is the immorality in Cézanne : he begins to see more than the All-seeing Eye of humanity can possibly see, kodak-wise. If you can see in the apple a bellyache and a knock on the head, and paint these in the image, among the prettiness, then it is the death of the Kodak and the movies, and must be immoral.

It's all very well talking about decoration and illustration, significant form, or tactile values, or plastique, or movement or space-composition or colour-mass relations, afterwards. You might as well force your guest to eat the menu card, at the end of the dinner.

What art has got to do, and will go on doing, is to reveal things in their different relationships. That is to say, you've got to see in the apple the bellyache, Sir Isaac's knock on the cranium, the vast moist wall through which the insect bores to lay her eggs in the middle, and the untasted, unknown quality which Eve saw hanging on a tree. Add to this the glaucous glimpse that the mackerel gets as he comes to the surface, and Fantin Latour's apples are no more to you than enamelled rissoles.

The true artist doesn't substitute immorality for morality. On the contrary, he *always* substitutes a finer morality for a grosser. And as soon as you see a finer morality, the grosser becomes relatively immoral.

The Universe is like Father Ocean, a stream of all things moving slowly. We move, and the rock of ages moves. And since we move and move for ever, in no discernible direction, there is no centre to the movement, to us. To us, the centre shifts at every moment. Even the pole-star ceases to sit on the pole. *Allons !* there is no road before us !

There is nothing to do but to maintain a true relationship to the things we move with and amongst and against. The

apple, like the moon, has still an unseen side. The movement of Ocean will turn it round to us, or us to it.

There is nothing man can do but maintain himself in true relationship to his contiguous universe. An ancient Rameses can sit in stone absolute, absolved from visual contact, deep in the silent ocean of sensual contact. Michael Angelo's Adam can open his eyes for the first time, and see the old man in the skies, objectively. Turner can tumble into the open mouth of the objective universe of light till we see nothing but his disappearing heels. As the stream carries him, each in his own relatedness, each one differently, so a man must go through life.

Each thing, living or unliving, streams in its own odd, intertwining flux, and nothing, not even man nor the God of man, nor anything that man has thought or felt or known, is fixed or abiding. All moves. And nothing is true, or good, or right ; except in its own living relatedness to its own circumambient universe ; to the things that are in the stream with it.

Design, in art, is a recognition of the relation between various things, various elements in the creative flux. You can't *invent* a design. You recognise it, in the fourth dimension. That is, with your blood and your bones, as well as with your eyes.

Egypt had a wonderful relation to a vast living universe, only dimly visual in its reality. The dim eye-vision and the powerful blood-feeling of the negro African, even to-day, gives us strange images, which our eyes can hardly see, but which we know are surpassing. The big, silent statue of Rameses, is like a drop of water, hanging through the centuries in dark suspense, and never static. The African fetish-statues have no movement, visually represented. Yet one little motionless wooden figure stirs more than all the Parthenon frieze. It sits in the place where no kodak can snap it.

As for us, we have our Kodak-vision, all in bits that group or jig. Like the movies, that jerk but never move. An endless shifting and rattling together of isolated images, "snaps," miles of them, all of them jigging, but each one utterly incapable of movement or change, in itself. A kaleidoscope of inert images, mechanically shaken.

And this is our vaunted "consciousness," made up, really, of inert visual images and little else ; like the cinematograph.

Let Cézanne's apples go rolling off the table for ever. They live by their own laws, in their own ambiente, and not by the law of the kodak—or of man. They are casually related to man. But to those apples, man is by no means the absolute.

A new relationship between ourselves and the universe means a new morality. Taste the unsteady apples of Cézanne, and the nailed-down apples of Fantin Latour are apples of Sodom. If the *status quo* were paradise, it would indeed be a sin to taste the new apples. But since the *status quo* is much more prison than paradise, we can go ahead.

(Next month : *Morality and the Novel.*)

Andron, the Good-for-Nothing.

By ALEXANDER NIEVIEROV.

"In the Russian Land the grass doesn't
grow in the same old way,
The flowers do not bloom as in
former days."

Folk-song.

I.

THE sun sows the dust about the cottage as if through a sieve. A cat on the window-sill scratches behind his ear with his paw. Granny Matrena in the front corner of the room prays to the Mother of God with a sigh :

"Most Holy Lady, Our Little Mother, preserve my good-for-nothing son Andron ! The fool went to fight—he'll be killed."

She bows to the ground ; the heels of her shoes stick upwards. A tear trickles down unnoticed—the offering of a sorrowful heart.

She feels sorry for the fool—he's so young !

The evening peeps in through the window, standing outside near the wall of the cottage, and quietly spreading a dark muslin veil of shadow. The cat on the window-sill washes his face. Granny Matrena says to him threateningly :

"Who are you luring in, you mangy beast ? Go away ! "

The door flew open ; little bells tinkled on the threshold. A red shirt struck her eyes. A cap with a finger sticking up on top, a five-pointed star on the cap. Granny rushed into the corner from fright.

"He has lured someone in, that devil of a cat ! "

The frightful man took off his cap and became a little like her own child.

"Good morning, mother ! "

The voice, oh, the voice is just like Andron's !

"Don't you recognise me ? "

"O Lord Jesus Christ, Andronushka ! "

She clasped her arms round Andron's neck, wept and smiled, and looked for a mark on his left cheek.

Let me, let me see! Uncouth one!"

When Andron makes a step, little bells tinkle in the cottage. He moves to the right—tinkling; moves to the left—again tinkling. He is all music!

"What is it that's jingling on you? Have you brought some toy with you?"

"They are spurs, mother."

"Och, you foolish boy! Why do you waste your money?"

* * *

Michaila, the father, is hurrying along the street. Sometimes he takes long strides, sometimes he stops altogether. . . . He has already heard about Andron's little bells and he feels shy.

Will he recognise his father's authority? Nowadays it's different from the old days.

He sends a joke into the cottage in front of him:

"Hey, my bast-shoe is coming untied, damn it! How soon will they put leather boots on the peasants' feet?"

Granny Matrena comes to meet him like a young woman.

"Andron has come back home!"

"Lame?"

"Fie on your dirty tongue!"

Michaila does not see Andron's face, he sees only his shirt. Too red it is!

"Let us kiss each other and let me congratulate you on your safe return."

"Good morning, father!"

"Good morning!"

Andron's revolver lies on the table in a small leather bag.

"What have you there?"

"A fire-arm."

"Does it shoot?"

"It shoots through two thick boards at a distance of fifteen yards."

"D'ye hear, mother?"

Granny's voice is girlish and thin.

"What a bad man you are, father! Why do you start questioning him at once?"

The samovar makes a joyous noise. Granny addresses it in the same reproachful way :

" You devil, do you forebode some evil ? Your voice is too wild to-day ! "

Andron says to her, as if he were reading out of a book :

" How funny you are, mother ! The samovar is an inanimate object."

Michaila winks his eye at Granny.

" Did you follow that ? "

And Granny winks at Michaila.

" Och, you old fool ! "

* * *

The room is full of guests. Uncle Lizar, Klym and his wife, Erofei and his wife, Vancha and his wife, the soldier's wife—Prokhorova—a real poppy in full bloom. Bosoms like hillocks in the fields, arms as if they were made out of the finest wheaten flour. Klym and Erofei look like real peasants : their beards are long, their hair uncombed. Vancha—quite a boy : he has a thin moustache, his little beard consists of four hairs. His wife is quite unattractive as well. Her belly sticks up under her skirt like an acorn, her nose is covered all over with freckles. Vancha has sucked her all round just from having nothing to do : the nights are long and he does not know any other craft.

Granny Matrena had smartened herself up—put on a navy-blue chintz blouse from the chest, covered her hair with a white handkerchief. She walks about the cottage like a peahen. Michaila's shirt swells like a bubble, tied around with a tape below his belly. He also tries to be as fashionable as he can. Somehow, he has succeeded in combing his beard a little.

The samovar, like a colt kept in the stable for a long time, makes the steam come out through his left nostril and clatters his cover from time to time. The cups and saucers talk to each other ; the guests carry on a noisy conversation.

" I congratulate you on your arrival, Andron Michailytch ! "

" Help yourself, please ! "

" Which towns have you been in ? "

" I've passed through twelve gubernia towns."

" Have you been in the Caucasus ? "

" Caucasus is not our territory : Georgians are there with the mensheviks."

Granny Matrena treats the guests as if it were a marriage-feast :

" Please take some sugar ! Have some sugar, please ! "

She cannot help whispering in Erofeeva's ear :

" He has brought three pounds with him ! "

Erofeeva whispers in Klimova's ear :

" Three pounds ! "

The cups clatter, the guests carry on a noisy conversation.

" Andron ! Little brother ! Will you recognise me in my rustic condition ? "

" Wait, Leksey Ivanytch, I have a religious question. Let's talk about God, Andron Michailytch ; does He exist or not ? "

" It's just a hoax ! "

What talk, what conversation ! Granny Matrena pours tea out of the tea-pot, missing the cup. To her it is incomprehensible, but sounds disturbing.

" It means that it is just a proclamation ? "

" Literally."

" Do you know for certain ? "

" Yes. It is a prejudice of the unenlightened masses ! "

Full-stop. And after it—darkness. Lizar bends his head sidewise.

" I agree with you, Andron Michailytch, but it seems doubtful. Religion is the principal thing in life."

" Nothing of the sort ! "

Vancha shouts in an irresolute voice :

" And who sends the rain ? "

His wife pulls him by the sleeve.

" Stop, stop. Listen, other people are speaking ! "

Klym says in a persuasive tone :

" Let me say a word, Andron Michailytch. Lizar Samoylytch, wait. Erofei, are you listening ? Rain is nothing to go by, Ivan Lukianytch. Rain comes from electricity, according to science. But I am thinking of capitalism. It is a serious thing if one comes across it. It may throw all the Land Department over ! "

Erofei falls on the table with his elbows downwards.

"Does it interfere?"

"With every step that one takes!"

"Damned thing!"

Andron tries to calm them.

"Capitalism is nothing to be afraid of. We would have finished with her a long time ago if the bourgeoise had not interfered."

Granny Matrena pours tea out of the tea-pot and misses the cup for the second time. What talk, what conversation!

Andron makes a movement—and the little bells tinkle under the table. Prochorova fans herself with a little handkerchief—she is hot.

"Andron! Little brother! What is the bolshevist party?"

"The most cunning of all!" interrupts Michaila. "Did you hear how cleverly they got hold of our corn? A man in a leather cap appeared and started to talk us round. You peasants are sickles—he said—and we, living in towns, are hammers. Let us form a union!"

Vancha bursts into laughter.

"A healthy programme!"

Lizar's head swims.

"The Commune will find no followers in our place, Andron Michailytch."

"Why?"

Michaila's head swims as well.

"I'll tell him!"

"Father, get away!"

Michaila is offended.

"Do you recognise me as your parent?"

Andron answers in a still louder voice:

"Father, don't lift up your hands against me! Vancha, hold my father's hands!"

Granny Matrena thumps Michaila's back with her fist:

"You've been drinking, you've been drinking, shameless, dishonest creature!"

Klym says in a persuasive tone:

"A misunderstanding arose through our conversation. Lizar Michailytch has touched on the question of commune from the economic point of view. Let us see, harrow, nails and other agricultural implements, we hardly have any. If

the commune is in a prosperous condition—well, we do not object to it. Am I right, Erofei ? "

Vancha strikes the table with his fist :

" By God, quite right ! "

Michaila fidgets on the bed.

" Lizar, don't recognise Andron's commune ! "

" You are an awfully ridiculous man, father, and your point of view is that of the small bourgeoisie."

Michaila falls down on the ground.

" Erofei, don't recognise Andron's commune ! "

* * *

Prokhorova cannot sleep—she is suffering.

Andron's shirt glows before her eyes, the little bells on his feet torture her. The blood runs quickly in her veins, flows to and fro. Her heart aches—it wants something. What it wants, no one can say.

That's what love is !

Prokhorova throws off the home-woven blanket, and sits on the bed with nothing on but her chemise. She is hot. The heart longs . . . longs . . . Everybody knows what it longs for, the never-caressed heart ! Who will blame her ?

The little bells tinkle behind the wall. Nearer and louder, louder and nearer. Evil spirits, why do you tempt the woman ? She hardly has time to cover herself with the blanket—Andron stands before her smiling. He only says three words :

" Frightened, Anna Stepanovna ? "

Three words like three nails. One pierced her heart, another pierced her head, the third pierced her hands and feet.

That's what love is !

Andron sat down on her bed, and Prokhorova had neither will nor wit of her own. The cock has crowed twice to make them part—they did not hear. The old mother has milked the cow—they did not see. They played under the home-spun blanket, and laughed.

" Andronushka, darling, go home ! "

' Annushka, darling, let me stay for a while ! "

" The people will see—they'll blame us ! "

" I'm not afraid of the people."

Andron's shirt has set the court-yard on fire. The thatched

roof burns above the bed, the wattle-hedge burns on all sides, the dawn breaks and it becomes bright.

"Andronushka, darling, stay in bed till dinner-time!"

"Annushka, darling, give me two good kisses!"

* * *

A day passes, a week passes—Andron does not pray to God.

Michaila says to the old woman:

"What shall I do with him?"

"Wait, old man, he'll become more reasonable!"

Michaila waits a day, waits a week—it is just the same, Andron does not pray to God.

Granny Matrena says to him:

"Cross yourself at the ikons, Andronushka!"

And he answers her:

"Leave these things alone, mother. Man was born of an ape."

Michaila's heart boils and overflows with wrath.

"In which book is that written?"

"Oh, you are illiterate, father."

"It means that you don't believe in the Church of God?"

"Ha! But Church is only a theatre for religious performances! I can act any of the roles myself if you like!"

Michaila took some drink to make himself bolder, and came close up to him.

"Who gave you birth, say?"

"Nature."

"Speak, what Nature?"

Andron saw that Michaila was turning up his sleeves, and laughed.

"Leave me alone, father, or I'll thrash you."

"Have you the right to thrash your own father?"

"I cannot beat my mother, but I'll knock you down without the right, if you threaten me with your fists."

"You're the son of a dog!"

Andron caught him by the arm.

"Fiddle-sticks, father, we'll not allow such things! Mother give me a belt, I'll tie his hands."

* * *

Michaila met Lizar in the street.

"Everything has gone wrong with me, uncle Lizar."

"What has happened?"

"There's no God, there's no Church, father and mother are an ape" . . .

"The young man must get married—it isn't good for him to remain single."

Lizar himself goes to see Andron in order to reason with him. Andron and Prokhorova sit in the cool, under the shed. He plays with his spurs, she fans herself with her little handkerchief and smiles at Andron's words.

"Good morning, Andron Michailytch. Have you a meeting, eh?"

"I am speaking about life, uncle Lizar."

"That's a good thing. What do you think of our life?"

"I am not at all satisfied with your management of affairs. There is no revolutionary understanding."

Lizar smiles.

"You're a clever man, Andron Michailytch, but still it would be better for you to get married, to take a definite stand as a husband."

"Why is it better?"

"Far better! As I understand it: being married one has many interests in all sorts of things. Annushka, go away, we have to speak about something between ourselves!"

Prokhorova tries to get up, Andron holds her back by the hand.

"Don't be embarrassed! The woman of to-day must take part in all sorts of discussions."

Lizar bends his head sidewise.

"You would do better not to mislead her, Andron Michailytch."

"How do I mislead her?"

"You are sowing the wrong seed. Is it possible for a woman to listen to your words? She is a young woman, it is hard for her to control herself."

"You're a queer fellow, uncle Lizar!"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean just what I say. I do not recognise church marriage and look upon a woman as a comrade!"

Lizar walked home as if he had just got out of a hot bath.

He turned back, when he was in the street, and spat. Michaila asked him through the window :

" Did you persuade my son to get married ? "

" Yes, I did."

* * *

A day passes, a week passes— Andron has spoiled the horse.

The horse was like all other horses. It used to trample over the meadow with its weary legs, to sniff over the mares. The daws used to steal tufts of hair from its back, the flies used to bite his belly all over. A gelding like all other geldings. Now, when he runs, the earth trembles. When Andron gallops along the street one cannot imagine who it is—a devil, a cossack, or neither. If a chicken runs under his feet—he crushes the chicken. If a goose is absent-minded—he runs over the goose. An old woman sees him through the window and crosses herself. A girl goes out of the gate-way and forgets where she is going. Andron's shirt glows like a fire. He moves his leg—it tinkles. He tilts his cap—no one has ever seen such a man in the whole village.

The girlish heart aches and feels excited.

Michaila's heart aches as well—he is sorry for the gelding.

What can he do with Andron ?

Michalia walked out into the court-yard and stopped, astonished. Whose horse is it that has run in, his tail all ribbons, his mane all ribbons, a red paper flower on his head ?

" Ech, son of a dog ! "

He wanted to pluck out all the decorations—Andron appeared before him.

" Father, don't be foolish ! "

Michaila felt sad :

" Why do you make the horse feel ashamed of itself ? "

" You are illiterate, father ! "

* * *

To break his son—he has not strength enough. To allow himself to be broken—he feels ashamed before the people. Michaila sits near his cottage ; his head is like a sack filled with sand. It drags him down, down. A sparrow chirps, a fly hums. A cock is treating a hen to a bit of corn, and talks to her in a loud voice :

" Co-co-co ! "

None of them feels human sorrow. Even a worm values life when it creeps under someone's feet. But Michaila's heart is like a jug filled with hot water. He is sorry to ridicule the gelding, he is sorry to go against his own nature. He is full of self-pity when he thinks of his life. He feels sorry for Andron, too. Why that cap with a star? Why that red shirt? That's what human sorrow is! Nobody knows anything, but Michaila knows less than anybody.

* * *

The three old men assembled, the oldest of all: Senin, Markonin, Potughin. With their three beards stuck up like three spikes they sit in judgment of Andron—the insolent one, the disrespectful one, the apostate. They utter words of justice, stopping from time to time and tapping with their sticks upon the floor.

"Tell us everything about your son, Michaila, say it openly!"

Michaila stands before the judges like a little boy.

"What shall I say—I don't know anything."

"Yes, you know!"

"I know many things—I don't know anything!"

"That's wrong!"

Potughin is the principal judge. He takes his stick in his right hand and writes an unknown letter by his left foot.

"We did not come here to swear at you. We came to talk kindly to you. Your son has lived here for a month—he has committed enough sins to fill two sacks. Our young men are disobedient, our young girls are unmanageable. They go to sleep unwedded, they get up and do not pray to God. Is there such a law?"

Senin answers with a sigh:

"There was not such a law in my time."

And Markonin answers with a sigh:

"I know: the Turks have such a law."

Michaila stands before the judges like a small boy.

"Why did you come to judge me? Do you think I am pleased myself? He did not ask my permission to put on a red shirt. He did not ask my permission to pin on the star. You see, I am as helpless as a flea under somebody's foot!"

Potughin turned his beard towards him and asked:

"When does he leave here?"

"He wants to stay here."

"Here?"

"Here!"

The three judges became silent, and bent their heads low.

That's what human sorrow is!

Three trees, scorched by a thunder-storm, grow at the foot of a mountain. Their leaves do not rustle, do not make anybody rejoice. There are no green leaves on the trees, there is no playful sunlight. Gloomily stand the three trees, burned by a thunder-storm.

The three judges bent their heads, frightened by the words:

"He wants to live here!"

The young girls will sleep unwedded, the sons will cease to obey. They'll stick red tapes in the horses' tails, they'll plait their manes as if for a marriage drive. They'll gallop on their backs and make the damned devil rejoice!

The nettle grows—who wants it?

The peasants' sorrow grows—who wants it?

They got up to go away—Andron entered the room from the entrance-hall.

"Stop, Markiel!"

"Wait, Kuzma!"

They look at the insolent one with three pairs of eyes, prick the good-for-nothing with three beards. They do not see Andron's face, they see his red shirt. His trousers cut like balloons, his feet wearing little bells. He does not look like a peasant at all. He went to the war—it was sad for his father and mother. He came back from the war—another sorrow for his father and mother. It would be better if such a one had been killed altogether!

Andron washed his face and started to wet his head. He fetched a mirror out of his chest—and began to smooth his moustache, trying to make it stick upwards.

A ne'er do well!

He clung to a beam with his hands and started to turn round like an acrobat: his head swinging upwards, his head swinging downwards. One would expect the sleeping-shelf to break at any moment. The old men stepped backwards, looked at him petrified:

" How crazy may a man become—O Lord ! "

Andron stopped playing and smiled.

" And you do not know how to do it ! "

Potughin scowled. He wanted to say a word of blame—Prokhorova entered the room. She had an embroidered blouse on, trimmed with lace, a many-coloured shawl and a skirt with frills.

" Good morning ! "

Andron shook hands with her.

" Sit down, please ! "

The little bells on his feet tinkled.

And Prokhorova was overjoyed. She wiped her face with a white handkerchief; she felt hot.

Potughin spat.

" Anka, aren't you ashamed ? "

" Why ashamed ? What of ? "

" It is not quite a proper thing to do : your own husband is only away."

" My own is not sweet enough, grandfather ! "

A horse may be fettered with an iron chain.

A colt may be tied to a spike with a cord.

How can one stop a woman who is possessed by the devil ?

There is no such chain.

There is no such word even.

The old men stood up, tapping their sticks on the floor.

" Come along, there is nothing else we can do here ! "

They walked, following each other, bending their backs. They entered the entrance-hall in silence, they walked out of the entrance-hall in silence. In the street they stopped.

" He wants to live here ! "

Translated by Lydia Jiburtovitch.

(*To be continued.*)

The Reminiscences of Mme. F. M. Dostoevsky.

TRANSLATED BY S. S. KOTELIANSKY.

OUR DICTATIONS (1874, 1875).

FIODOR always worked at night, when perfect stillness reigned in the house, and nothing could disturb the flow of his thoughts. He dictated to me in the afternoons, from two to three, and I remember those hours as the happiest of my life. . . . As he finished his dictation, my husband always addressed me like this :

" Well, what do you say, Anechka ? "

" I say it is grand ! " I would answer. But that " grand " Fiodor would interpret to mean that the scene, just dictated by him, was done well, but that it did not particularly strike me. And on my immediate impressions my husband set great value. It always so happened somehow that the passages in his novels which moved or depressed me acted in the same way on the majority of the readers, of which fact my husband would learn from his talks with his readers or from the opinions of the critics.

I wanted to be sincere, and did not express praise or admiration when I did not feel them. My husband valued my sincerity very much. Nor did I conceal my impressions. I remember how much I laughed at the talks of Mme. Khokhlakov and of the General in *The Idiot*, and how I teased my husband about the speech of the Crown Prosecutor in *The Brothers Karamasov.*

" What a pity you are not a Crown Prosecutor ! You could send the most innocent man to Siberia with your speech."

" So you think I've managed the speech well ? " Fiodor asked.

" Remarkably well ! " I answered. " Yet I am sorry that you did not choose the law ! You would have risen to the rank

of General, and I should now be Mme. General, and not the wife of a retired sub-lieutenant ! "

After Fiodor had dictated to me the defending counsel's speech (in *The Brothers Karamasov*) and asked me the usual question, I replied :

" Now I can only say this—why did not you, my dear, become a counsel ! You would make the most thorough criminal whiter than snow. Surely you have missed your vocation ! You've managed the counsel splendidly ! "

But at times I also shed tears. I remember my husband dictating to me the scene in which Aliosha and the boys return from Ilyushechka's funeral [*The Brothers Karamasov*]. I was so moved that with one hand I copied from his dictation, and with the other I wiped away my tears. Fiodor noticed my agitation, came up to me, and without saying a word, kissed my head.

Fiodor thought highly of me, and attributed to me a much deeper understanding of his works than, I think, was actually the case. He was convinced, for instance, that I understood the philosophical side of his novels. I remember how, after he had dictated to me the chapter on " The Grand Inquisitor," I replied to his usual question :

" You know, I really understood very little of it. I think that in order to understand it, I ought to have had a philosophical training."

" Wait," my husband said, " I'll put it more clearly to you."

And he told me of the idea in terms which I could more easily understand.

" Well, is it clear now ? " he asked.

" No, it is not clear even now. If you were to make me repeat it, I should not be able to do it."

" Why, you understand it ? I conclude this from the questions you have been putting to me. And if you can't express it, it is because of your lack of form, of style."

I may say here, by the way, that the longer my life with its accompanying sad complications went on, the more widely opened to me were the works of my husband, and the more deeply I began to understand them.

From our life at Staraia Roussa, I recall the occasion on

which Fiodor read to me the chapter of his novel (*The Raw Youth, Part I., Chap. X.*) in which the girl hangs herself. On finishing reading, Fiodor glanced at me and exclaimed :

" Anya, what's the matter with you, darling ? You are pale. Are you tired, are you ill ? "

" You have frightened me ! " I said.

" My God, does it indeed produce such a painful impression ! How very sorry I am ! How very sorry ! "

Fiodor under Secret Police Surveillance (1875).*

. . . On receiving my card, the Captain immediately invited me into his room, asked me to sit down, and enquired what was my business. He brought out from his desk a rather thick portfolio, in a blue wrapper, and handed it to me. I opened it, and to my great surprise, I saw that it was " The Case of the Retired Sub-Lieutenant Fiodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky, kept under secret police surveillance and temporarily residing at Staraia Roussa." I perused several pages, and said to him laughingly :

" Well ? So we are under your enlightened surveillance, and you probably know everything concerning us ? I must say I did not expect it ! "

" Yes, I know of everything that is taking place in your family," the Captain said pompously. " I can say that I have been quite satisfied with your husband up till now."

" May I repeat your compliment to my husband ? " I asked.

" I beg you to tell him that he is behaving excellently, and that I hope he won't give me any trouble in the future."

On coming home, I told Fiodor what the Captain had said, and laughed at the idea that a man like my husband should be under the surveillance of a silly policeman. But Fiodor received my news with pain.

" What a number of evil-minded persons they have missed keeping an eye on," Fiodor said, " yet they suspect and watch

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* The Dostoevskies spent the whole of 1874 in Staraia Roussa. As the novelist was advised by his doctor to go again to Ems for a cure, Mme D. went to the local Captain of the police to ask for a passport for her husband to travel to Germany.

me, a man devoted with all his heart and thoughts to the Tsar and the country. It does hurt ! "

Thanks to the loquacious Captain, a very annoying circumstance, the cause of which we could not understand, had now been cleared up. We could not understand why letters sent by me from Staraia Roussa to my husband at Ems were not sent off the same day, but were kept back by the post office for a day or two. The same thing happened with Fiodor's letters to me from Ems. And the fact that my husband did not receive my letters in time not only caused him anxiety, but even drove him at times to fits of epilepsy (as is seen from his letter to me of July 16-28, 1874). Now, it became clear that our letters were subject to secret examination, and that their despatch depended on the discretion of a police captain, who was often away for two or three days in the country.

The secret examination to which the authorities subjected my correspondence with my husband (and possibly all our correspondence) went on in later years too, and caused my husband and myself not a few anxieties ; but we could not rid ourselves of that inconvenience. Fiodor himself did not raise the question of obtaining relief from this ; moreover, informed persons assured him that, seeing that he had been permitted to be editor and publisher of " The Journal of an Author," the secret surveillance of his activity must have been removed. However, it continued till 1880, when, during the Pushkin festival, Fiodor happened to mention the matter to a highly-placed personage, who gave an order for removing it.

Friends.

In the winter of 1876 the number of Fiodor's acquaintances in society had considerably increased. Everywhere he was very welcome, for people valued not only his intellect and talent, but also his kind heart, so responsive to all human misery.

I did not go into society that winter : I used to get so tired during the day with my work on *The Journal of an Author*, with my household occupations, and with looking after the children, that in the evening I only wanted to rest, to read a book ; and in society I should probably have cut a dull figure. Yet I did not regret my absence from society ; for ever since our return to Russia (in 1871) Fedya, concerned at my not

going into society, and thinking I might be bored at home, had got into the habit, which he kept up for the rest of his life of telling me everything he had seen or heard or talked about on such occasions. And Fiodor's accounts were so fascinating and were related so well that they were quite a good substitute for society. I remember always waiting impatiently for his return home. He used to return at one or half-past in the morning. Fresh tea was always waiting for him at that hour. He would change into his wide summer overcoat (which served him as a dressing-gown), drink a glass of hot tea, and start telling me of the events of the previous night. Fiodor knew that I was interested in details, and, therefore, he did not slur over them, but told me of all his conversations, in answer to my constant questions: "And what did she say to you? What did you reply to him?"

When he used to return from one of these evenings, Fiodor did not sit down to work, but, as he was in the habit of going to bed late (at five o'clock in the morning), we would pass the time in talking till five; at last Fiodor would make me go to bed, saying I should have a headache if I sat up later, and promising to finish the account the next day.

Sometimes Fiodor would boast to me of how he had scored in a literary or political discussion. At others he would tell me of some blunder he had committed, of how he had not recognised one or cut another, and what a misunderstanding had arisen on that account; and he would ask my opinion or advice how to put the blunder right. Sometimes he frankly complained of how certain people were unjust to him, and how they tried to insult him, or to prick his *amour-propre*. I must say that men of his profession, even those who possessed intellect and talent, often did not spare him, and with petty pricks and insults tried to show how little his talent meant in their eyes. For instance, some of them would not speak at all to Fiodor of his latest work, as though not wishing to upset him by their poor opinion of it; although they, of course, knew that he did not expect extravagant compliments from them, but wanted their sincere opinion as to how far he had succeeded in carrying through the idea of this or that novel. Again, if Fiodor asked a "friend" point blank if he had read the last instalment of his new story (say—a month after its publication), the "friend"

would answer that "the young generation was fascinated by the novel, that it was passing from hand to hand and was highly praised"; although the speaker knew quite well that it was not the opinion of young people that was valuable to Fiodor, but the speaker's personal opinion, and that Fiodor would be pained that his "friend" was so little interested in his work that for a whole month he had not found the time to read it.

I remember, for instance, a case when a certain author, meeting Fiodor in society, declared to him that he had at last managed to read *The Idiot* (which had appeared five years previously), and that he liked the novel, but found an inaccuracy in it.

"And what is the inaccuracy?" Fiodor was intrigued, thinking that it was in the idea, or in the characters of the novel.

"I have spent this summer in Pavlovsk," the author answered, "and in my walks with my daughters we have been looking for the fine summer-house, in the style of a Swiss chalet, in which the heroine of the novel, Aglaia Epanchin, lived. As you please, but we found no house like that existing in Pavlovsk." . . .

Another writer declared (on a subsequent occasion) that he had read twice with the greatest curiosity the Crown Prosecutor's speech (in *The Brothers Karamasov*), and the second time he read it with a watch in his hand.

"Why with a watch?" my husband asked, surprised.

"In the novel you say that the speech lasted . . . minutes. I wanted to verify it. It turned out that it lasted only . . . ."

Fiodor first thought that the Crown Prosecutor's speech had so much impressed the speaker that he wished to read it a second time. But the reason turned out to be such a petty one that it could only have been mentioned with the object of insulting or wounding Fiodor. And such instances of the attitude of literary contemporaries to my husband were not few.

Fiodor's Death.

Fiodor was naturally a singularly hard-working man. It seems to me that even if he had been rich and had had no

need to earn a living, he would not have remained idle, but would constantly have found subjects for unceasing literary activity.

By the beginning of 1881 our debts, which had tormented us for so long, had all been paid, and we had even about five thousand roubles due to us from the *Russky Vestnik* (the fees for *The Brothers Karamasov*). It would have seemed that there was no urgent need for Fiodor to set to work instantly again ; but he did not want to rest. He decided to start again *The Journal of an Author*, for during the last few troublous years there had been accumulating in his mind certain anxious ideas about the political situation in Russia, and he could express them freely in his *Journal* only. Besides, the success of the only number of *The Journal of an Author* for 1880 gave us hope that the renewed publication would find a greater number of readers, and Fiodor valued the dissemination of his innermost ideas very much. He intended to carry on the publication of *The Journal* for two years, and then he meant to write the second part of *The Brothers Karamasov*, in which nearly all the characters would appear again, twenty years later, almost in our own time, during which period they would have managed to achieve and to go through a good deal. The plan of the future novel, outlined by Fiodor in his conversations and in his notes, was extraordinarily interesting, and it is the greatest pity that it was not destined to be completed.

The subscription to *The Journal of an Author*, announced in the papers, went on successfully, and in the middle of January we had * . . . subscribers.

Fiodor had always had the good habit of not considering the subscription money as his own until the subscribers had been satisfied ; and accordingly he opened an account in the State Bank, to which account I paid in the moneys received from subscribers. Owing to this circumstance I always had it in my power to refund the subscription money to the subscribers.

The first half of January Fiodor felt very well, went out a great deal, and even agreed to take part in a theatrical performance which was to be produced at the house of Countess

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* Here is a lacuna in the text.

S. A. Tolstoy in the beginning of the following month. Several scenes from Count A. K. Tolstoy's trilogy were to be performed, and Fiodor chose the part of the ascetic monk in *The Death of Ivan the Terrible.*

During the last three years his attacks of epilepsy ceased to torment him, and his healthy and cheerful manner gave us all the hope that he would get through the winter all right. In the middle of the month Fiodor began working on the January number of *The Journal of an Author*, in which issue he had wished to express his ideas and opinions on the "Zemsky Sobor" Constitution. The subject of his article being one which the censor might object to, Fiodor felt very anxious about it. But the newly-appointed President of the Censorship Board, N. S. Abasa, having learnt from Countess S. A. Tolstoy of this anxiety, asked her to tell Fiodor not to worry, as he himself would be the censor of the article. By January 25 the article was ready and sent off to the printers; so to have *The Journal* ready for delivery on the last day of the month all that remained to be done was the passing of the article by the censor, the final reading of the proofs, and the actual printing of *The Journal.*

(Doestovsky died three days later.)

Notes and Reviews.

Notes on Music.

(III) THE PROMENADE CONCERTS.

THE immense practical disadvantages under which musicians are compelled to labour are seldom realised by their more fortunate literary colleagues. While it is possible to buy the complete works of Shakespeare, Milton and Chaucer for a few shillings, the complete works of Beethoven, Bach and Mozart, including full orchestral scores, would cost, I should imagine, little less than a hundred pounds. Even then it would be difficult to obtain them as they are for the most part out of print. Again, while the art-lover can acquire reproductions of the greatest masterpieces of painting, sculpture, and architecture for a relatively small amount of money, and has at his disposal many permanent institutions such as the National Gallery or the Wallace collection, where he can study many of the originals whenever he chooses, there is no musical equivalent. All we have to take their place is the yearly season of Promenade Concerts—a musical National Gallery existing precariously during the only three months of the year when the ordinary concert-givers and purveyors of music (who seem to look upon the art of sounds as something akin to oysters, pork or haggis, and not to be partaken of during certain months without dire consequences) do not happen to require the Queen's Hall for their own purposes.

With all their defects, we should be sorry to lose them, for there is nothing else to take their place. Apart from them, there are only one or two concerts during the whole year which one would wish to attend, such is the devastating monotony of the majority of the programmes. At the Promenade Concerts one can hear, night after night, works of the "old masters" which one has otherwise no opportunity of hearing at all. It cannot be denied that the performances of them are frequently exceedingly perfunctory, but an indifferent performance of an unfamiliar masterpiece is often preferable to a good one of a work which one has already heard a hundred times and would willingly never hear again.

While it is good to see an increasing recognition every year on the part of the management of the true function of these concerts, namely, the production of old masterpieces, it is unfortunate that they also feel constrained to attempt to play the rôle of musical Tate Gallery as well as National Gallery. This, I think, is a mistake:

it is impossible to perform both functions well, and the new works which are produced during the season are for the most part second-rate; when they are not, they are invariably badly performed, owing, primarily, to insufficient rehearsal. Besides, the Promenade public does not want them. The evenings which draw the largest attendances are undoubtedly those which are devoted to the old masters. New works attract only a very few, and their performance should be left to the several series of so-called Symphony Concerts which dispose of more time for rehearsal and generally attain a higher level of technical execution. The public which attends these latter concerts are attracted by names rather than by works, by the reputations of virtuosi, whether conductors, violinists, pianists, or 'cellists, rather than by the reputations of composers. In fact, the depressing "safeness" of Symphony Concert programmes seems wholly unjustified. The public which goes to hear Heifetz or Pablo Casals is not likely to be kept away by the substitution of a work of Schönberg for Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, while the first of the two would certainly attract a considerable number of musicians who would otherwise have stayed away.

To return to the Promenade Concerts, another mistaken policy is the performance of innumerable mediocre works by composers such as Saint Saëns, Gounod, Dvorak, who are represented in the season's programmes by nine, eight and six items, while Berlioz and Debussy are represented by only two each, and Delius by only one. I do not believe that a single person comes to these concerts with any desire to hear the works of Saint Saëns. If his music was really popular it would be a different matter. Speaking for myself, I would a hundred times sooner hear the Overture to "Zampa" than one of his piano concertos, and I am sure many people feel the same. The frankly vulgar and blatant is preferable to this pallid, pseudo-classical refinement.

The two foregoing criticisms concern errors of commission, but there is one error of omission which is very much more serious, namely, the almost total neglect of the Romantic composers. One hopes that in future the management will consider the advisability of devoting a single evening a week mainly to the works of this school, from Schubert up to Delius, in the same way that they have done with other schools and periods. The necessary space for this could easily be found by eliminating, or at least restricting in number, compositions of the kind alluded to in the preceding paragraph, which no one really wishes to hear.

Against the greatest defect of all, the second part of the programmes, which is mainly devoted to the performance of the worst kind of sentimental ballads, it is presumably useless to protest. As long as Messrs. Chappell own the Queen's Hall and finance the concerts, so long, presumably, shall we have to tolerate an aural outrage equivalent to the nasal one we should experience on finding

a *lieu d'aisance* in the porch of a Gothic cathedral. But since these monstrosities are not allowed to intrude into the first part of the programme (already sufficiently long for any normal person), their offensiveness is considerably lessened, and can always be escaped except on the exceedingly rare occasions when one desires to hear the last orchestral item on the programme performed under the far from expert guidance of the first violin, Sir Henry himself having by this time taken his departure. Even he, it seems, after about thirty years' experience of aural stenches, has not yet succeeded in acquiring sufficient stoicism to ensure the sound of such things in the comparatively remote seclusion of the green room.

On the whole, it may safely be said that the vocal items are the weakest, owing to the low executive ability of singers compared with instrumentalists, and to their almost complete lack of the even the most rudimentary form of human intelligence. Was it not von Bülow who said that a voice was not a gift, but a disease ? (My personal opinion is that singers for the most part—there are a few exceptions—are hardly to be regarded as human beings at all, but rather as survivals of the primitive race known as Neanderthal Man. I respectfully offer the suggestion to the consideration of anthropologists). The best that can be said for the majority of the vocal items performed at the Promenade Concerts is that they afford one an excellent excuse for a visit to the bar, which is not least among the varied attractions of the Queen's Hall.

The instrumental soloists have been for the most part adequate, and sometimes distinctly good, while the orchestral playing has maintained a good average level. The best feature of the *ensemble* has been the very fine playing of the wood-wind and horns, the poorest has been the playing of the strings, which seem to be deteriorating from year to year in this country.

Apart from the section devoted to modern works, of which only those by Béla Bartók and Arnold Bax seemed to be worth listening to, the programmes were on a very much higher level of interest than in any former year. Instead of relying exclusively on the ordinary stock repertoire, the management has gone out of its way to bring to light little known or forgotten works by the great masters which one has never had an opportunity of hearing before. This is a wholly admirable policy which one hopes to see extended in future seasons.

Nevertheless, the claims of the box office cannot be ignored, more especially when the box office is that of Messrs. Chappell, and there is little doubt that it is the more familiar part of the repertoire which constitutes the greatest attraction for the majority of the Promenade audience—or rather audiences, for there are at least four or five separate publics which are catered for. For example, there is the Monday night audience, consisting partly of unsatisfied virgins of both sexes who find in Wagner's erotic

strains the satisfaction of their innermost desires, and partly of the old race of Wagnerians who know every theme by its pet name, and can tell you what stage action corresponds with each bar of the music. On Tuesday evening a larger proportion of Oxford trousers are to be found than on any other evening of the week, Mozart and Haydn being the latest fashion in æsthetic circles. On Wednesdays and Fridays, which are mainly devoted to Bach and Beethoven, the largest section of the audience is composed of serious young men and women from the suburbs who needs must try to love the highest when they hear it, and are bent on improving their minds with quite heroic tenacity. The proportion of genuine music-lovers is, and must always be, comparatively small, and this has to be borne in mind when criticising the programmes which, in spite of inevitable concessions to popular taste, nevertheless represent a remarkably high standard of musical culture and appreciation.

CECIL GREY.

H. G. Wells.

MR. PREEMBY, alias Mr. Britling, alias Mr. Polly, alias Bert Smallways, alias Kipps, is a familiar whom Mr. Wells has always with him. Since we judge people by their friends, it will, perhaps, be useful to find out who this protean character really is, and what is the lifelong attraction he has for Mr. Wells.

I think there is no doubt that he began his career, with his historian, in a little seaside provincial town, in the days of Joseph Chamberlain, Cecil Rhodes, the Aesthetic movement, Gilbert and Sullivan, The Souls, first signs of Modern Labour unrest, jerry-building, and the beginning of cycling. The good Victorian Earth was quaking a little just then, and certain truculences in the lower-middle and working classes were to be noticed side by side with a certain dimming of the splendid arrogance of the landed gentry. These two qualities, however, were but tentative things, completely overshadowed by that fierce, true middle-class materialism which had been growing all through the nineteenth century, and now threw off all pretence at modesty by taking up the banner of Liberalism and planting it in Mayfair, and in those country mansions which could no longer be supported by the dwindled India House fortunes.

The newcomers, however, wanted luxury, and more wealth to provide more luxury. So they incorporated their religious conscience, their ethical creed, and their political bias, into one complacent working-proposition—individualism and the freedom of the individual. We see now that the emphasis was on the article, that "*the* individual," was a term which had as many interpretations as it had supporters.

So began the sanctification of the doctrine of "self-help." There was no escaping from it. Even the Oxford Movement had not succeeded in keeping it out of the Church. It was the sole tenet of Nonconformity. Science, too, succumbed, for the gentle and tentative Darwin was hastily thrust upon an innocuous throne—where he could be out of the way—and the theory of the survival of the fittest was boomed. The few uneasy chemists were silenced by being quickly absorbed into the research laboratories of the industrial concerns, and made to work to a utilitarian end. They had no time even for physics, to say nothing of metaphysics.

So it seems that forty years ago there was no escape ; absolutely none. It was your religious destiny, it was your biological necessity, it was your political duty, to *work* ! But work had then a special meaning. It meant entering a factory, an office, a bank, a stock exchange, or any other institution that supported *the* institution—the Empire—the giant machine which was to exploit the whole world and convert it into dividends. There was no escape for the meek. They were *made* to inherit the Earth. What else was there to do ? The lower-middle class lad was not able even to think of an alternative. The free education which he now received at the Board School prepared him to become office or factory fodder. His Sunday School taught him the nobility, and his evening Polytechnic the utility, of that aim. There was no escape.

Mr. Wells, however, escaped ; and he dragged his pathetic, sloping-shouldered, little familiar with him. What makes this important to us is the fact that the passive member of this escapade *was* the lower middle classes. It has been Mr. Wells' latest fancy to invest him with the dignity of Sargor, King of Kings. But Mr. Wells has always been doing that. Ever since in the "Wheels of Chance" he induced that little figure—rather like a meek, thin, under-developed specimen of Bairnsfather's "Old Bill"—to slip away from the shop at Hythe and to set out on that perilous cycle tour, he has been pumping his own inexhaustible energy into the pathetic rebel, driving him on through book after book to a more coherent, a more self-explained, and a more consciously ethical adventure in a world which Mr. Wells had discovered to be completely illiberal and non-individualistic in the Victorian political sense of the words, because completely communistic, free, liberal, and individualistic in the natural and scientific sense of the words. No doubt the young adventurers did set off on the "Wheels of Chance," but one feels that it was something more than chance which caused the passive partner to have that cycle accident in the first book, and so to become a little queer, a little too unreliable to be of further use in the great industrial machine whose wheels went to the rhythm of "Grab all ! Grab all ! Grab all ! "

If it was not chance that provided the victim with a C_3 certificate to save him from active service—what else could it have been ?

It was Mr. Wells' abnormal emotional genius. Only he can say how far it was conscious in those early days; but from a study of its later development, and its methods of development, we may suspect how that genius has led a sort of opportunist existence—conforming, thereby, to the line of conduct usual to genius, which by its very transcendence of reason, must always be immediate, concrete and unspeculative.

That enormous emotional energy I believe to be the mainspring of Mr. Wells' being. If we look at it from some points of view, it can appear to be disgusting. Indeed, throughout his work there is a quite strong suggestion of the lachrymose; a certain sponginess. But we must be careful how we condemn that—for it is also the moisture of fecundity—a kind of tropical exhalation favourable to enormous fruitfulness. It gives him a shamelessness, however, that is very un-English, for it saps all our insular and starchy dignity out of his character, making him springy and volatile—with a sort of divine treachery such as we associate with the Olympians. In his erotic moments it can make him repulsive to our reserved English taste. His love scenes are latinised—too fiercely concerned with procreation. Even in a chilly setting on the slopes of the Alps, his heroine in her moment of passion, gloats over the idea of a crêche-full of babies—her babies. But we cannot wish this quality away from Mr. Wells, for it is so consistently a part of him. His elemental vitality is more than that of an individual—it is racial. See, for instance, how parental it is.

There was surely never such fervid portrayal of the love between parents and children as in his work. It even becomes, like his erotic love, almost indecent because of its fierceness. When Christina Alberta discovers her real father, we are aware of a new power in the story, as though the passion that slumbers in the book of Genesis had crept in here. The deification of fatherhood almost terrifies us. Christina stands at the door of her studio saying good-night to her new-found father—poor little Preemby is forgotten for the moment; a mere ghost away there in the asylum—— There they sat till one o'clock in the morning talking earnestly—the truth of their relationship tacitly revealed. When they touch hands at parting one wonders what *will* happen next; what new demonstration of the merging of human being into human being, capable of expressing this agony of yearning, without slipping into the region of horror. But it is too much even for our modern Zeus, and he leaves it—the father and daughter just shake hands and say Good-night.

But however we may be shocked by this Olympian emotional force, we must feel that it is profoundly right, though it is subversive of our urban decencies and our antiseptic, sterile civilisations. For above all things—and this is what makes Mr. Wells so important—it is fruitful. It is eternally youthful—with all the

bad taste and tactlessness of youth. It teems with hope, faith, and the undying and all-forgiving charity of true religious passion. Therefore, to-day, it makes Mr. Wells a prophet coming into his own. It takes him up, filling him with a strength beyond his comprehension, just as it made a Sargon of the pathetic Mr. Preemby. It sends the blood of the whole family of humanity surging through his veins, so that he feels and loves, brooding like a mother over her children. It is all so much more vital and creative than even the logic of Mr. Shaw, which encircles the temperate zones of the Earth, sketching a logical and sanitary utopia. Mr. Wells, in theory, would do the same, for he too has walked the wards of Fabianism. But that terrible force will not leave him amongst the text-book administrators and healers. It forces upon him—with all the immediate problems of the senses—the wistfulness, the humour, the well-nigh unendurable tragedy of the individual in the grip of life.

Well nigh ! but this power in Mr. Wells comes with an exhortation to prolong the struggle, and tells us to believe in our blindness, and our failures, since they are a negative demonstration of sight, and of triumph.

Let us return to Mr. Preemby and his many previous incarnations through the fifty-odd Wells volumes. What are the most obvious qualities which he retains in all his various lives ? They are meekness, allied to a sort of irrelevant pertness. The latter quality is difficult to define, but we must try to do so, for it is there with a large significance, since it is to provide the means for Mr. Wells and his enormous protegé to escape from the Moloch which has been described above. That pertness is a complicated quality because it has been cultivated as a means of defence against a complicated environment. It expresses above all things a sense of injury. In particular we see this factor of it in Mr. Polly and Bert Smallways. The antagonist is so much more powerful than these poor, unorganised Kippses, Smallways, and Pollys. One can play sly tricks on it, perhaps, but it wins in the end. Then again, it is always so intangible. You think you have a definite grievance and can speak out to get it remedied. But no ; the responsibility is shifted further away. Your foreman passes it on to the works manager. Thence it goes to the directors—but they are responsible to the shareholders—who, poor souls, are harassed by foreign competition. So there is added the quality of bewilderment to that pertness, and the victims become a little childish, with a tinge of the tragic Lear about them. It makes them irritable, too, as though some foolish practical joke is being played upon them day after day. To be poked and prodded by some unseen finger is devastating to one's dignity. One becomes a little demoralised, inclined to bluster, or on occasion to whimper and protest in a sort of whining way.

These are the slavish qualities. But beneath them there are the

deeper feelings; the remembrance of a sordid childhood, of an adolescence robbed of its freedom to roam and select a vocation; of a young married life de-natured by the all-prevading asafœtida of poverty. Then there is the constant sense of justice outraged, the buying and selling of souls, the veiled threat of starvation. Finally, and most deeply rankling, there is the constant patronage of poverty by wealth—that sin against the Holy Ghost in man.

This, then, is the complicated seed of rebellion which Mr. Wells found in his urban and suburban England. How did he educate it to action? He did so by methods congenial to its nature. He knew that it was too volatile and gutter-witted to be roused by a logical exposition of its wrongs. It was also too cowed to respond to an emotional appeal. But it was adept in ca'canny, in tricky evasion, for that had been found to be the only successful means of slipping the weight of one's harness. So Mr. Wells ingeniously adapted this faculty. He taught his people to utilise their ignorance —that result of the division of labour—and by a gentle and almost unconscious exaggeration of their lifelong bewilderment, to render themselves useless to the Masters of the Machine. He taught them the opossum trick. By the nice people that too may be counted against him as bad taste. But he cannot be judged by such standards. He is vindicating the forces of nature—and nature is not above such tricks when it is a question of extinction or survival. In himself, he is completely unashamed, for shame is a flagging of vitality, and of that there is no sign in him. In his new book* he harps on this theme, as though he recognises the ostracising finger of an outraged code of English manners. He says that "perhaps all leadership is a kind of flight"; and again, "the world will never learn anything until it will learn from ridiculous people"; and again, "I do not want to be a brilliant person. I want to be a vital part."

That is a far remove from the Fabian days, and from the intellectual aristocracy of Mr. Shaw. But even Mr. Shaw seems to recognise the creative power behind these instinctive methods, for he tries to carry it into the character of Joan. It is not quite convincing, however. It seems to be introduced by intellectual conviction rather than by sheer irresponsible faith and energy. These sayings of Mr. Wells' show that his conduct, too, is determined. But it is determined after the event. There is something in him which moves first. He acts; then thinks. Mr. Shaw writes about it as the "life-force." It stirs and inflames Mr. Wells, working him up to almost uncontrollable emotional vision of a humanity that has never lost its fervour, or its inspiration to a Father above. He is truly on the side of the angels.

We see again why Mr. Wells is so important to us to-day. He is

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*"Christina Alberta's Father." (*Cape*, 7/6)

a man of faith. He is a man of works. That is to be Christlike, carrying in all one does an assurance of untold potentiality, so that every action has a symbolical value, and is an interpretation of all that has gone before. It is a key to some long unsolved problem in the history of Man.

What richness this signifies ! It means that as Mr. Wells writes, the conscious illusion of his fiction is suffused by a vital spirit—his own daemon let us call it. It is the spirit, however, which carries an assurance of immortality, for it is ever-changing, ever new, ever creative, informing the word, the scene, with a special substantiality for every reader. To do that requires more than talent ; it requires the vitality of genius.

RICHARD CHURCH.

ART AND THE UNCONSCIOUS. By JOHN M. THORBURN. (Kegan Paul. 10s. 6d.)

LIKE the majority of people who consider the question at all, Mr. Thorburn proposes to ask " how far the problem of art and the sources of its inspiration may be re-stated in the light of those discoveries of contemporary Psychology which centre round what has been called, significantly enough, the Unconscious." As many others will propose the same question, masking the paucity and banality of their ideas with the glamour of quasi-psychological diction, it is worth while examining some of the deductions and statements which Mr. Thorburn makes. It is not easy to do this, as he writes with a confusing uncertainty, prefacing almost every sentence with an " It is not unlikely " or " It is probable."

Thirty-eight pages of discussion as to the closeness of the analogy between the unity of a dream and the unity of a work of art leads to : (1) the conclusion that " medium is one of the things that distinguishes the dream of natural sleep from the dream of art " ; (2) the inclination to consider it as *the* distinction ; (3) the certainty " that there is something earthly and earthy about art." But since " the power of having images and the technique of their expression stand in no necessary correlation "—" for there is a difference between the deep slumbering of a weary man and the open-eyed dreaming of the poet "—Mr. Thorburn thinks we need to introduce the term imagination. Naturally enough, he opens the next section with the questions : " What is imagination ? Whence did it come ? Does it lead anywhere, and if so, whither ? " His answers are in no way explicit. He suggests, however, that in the imagination we find a " curious bivalence "—in form going back to the past, in direction seeking the future—and " hazards the view " that the point where psychology is related to the problem of art is the discovery of the " hitherto unsuspected relation that exists between early childhood and the later phases of adolescence."

He then praises and explains Freud's initial discovery, and discards its ramifications, in so far as they offer to explain art, with this naïve remark : " Now failure—of whatever kind, whether biological or otherwise—is *ipso facto* not valuable." For the first time the book becomes interesting, when it discusses Jung's divergence of opinion, and more intelligible since Jung's own words are used ; but, that support withdrawn, Mr. Thorburn deduces in his own way that it is " very simple and quite true to say that both in form and content, poetry is archaic. But if I am met with the old objection that in art there is no distinction between content and form, I am satisfied with saying that it uses every artifice and exerts all its powers to take you back into past phases of experience and into the ancient history of peoples." And so without answering the objection he himself has raised, he adds that " the poet's goal is to think as a child, to understand as a child. He must deliver himself from the burden of the intellect of his day, and the complexity of the forms of speech which it involves." From this point of view Mr. Thorburn is a most poetical thinker, but he does not free himself from the complexity of speech. The assumption which, at this point, he thinks to be not unwarranted, is that " much of the greatest art is symbolical " ; with the proviso that " at present we cannot be more than tentative " as to whether all art is exclusively and essentially symbolical.

He remains tentative to the end, but his bias in favour of symbolical art is intimated by his remarks about significant form, and his mystical (and quite uninteresting) divagation about the Ravenna mosaics. It is unnecessary to follow the elaboration of his theme, for enough has been said to show the inefficiency of his method. It is unfortunate that Messrs. Kegan Paul, who have already issued psychologico-aesthetic books so interesting as Mr. Richards's, should publish one with so portentous a title as *Art and the Unconscious*, which can only obscure the relationship. Mr. Thorburn's book is to be condemned specifically for its style —he uses phrases such as " the *saltus* that we have to make seems for a moment too vertiginous," and such words as " artefact "—and for its inaccuracy. Milton is not an Elizabethan, and the reference in the second foot-note on p. 68 should be Vol. III., Part 3 for Vol. III., Part 2. As one of a class of literature which makes use of science unscientifically, this book serves as an illustration. Mr. Thorburn has done little but write round and digress from Jung's formulation : " The creative process, *in so far as we are able to follow it at all*, consists in an unconscious animation of the archetype, and in a development and shaping of this image till the work is completed. This shaping . . . is, as it were, a translation into the language of the present, thus enabling man to be stirred again by the deepest springs of life, which would otherwise be closed to them," and " Art *in statu nascendi* is an autonomous complex."

This is a much more acceptable relation of psychology to art, but it does not tell us much. Where Jung treads with such discretion, less able psychologists would do well to show an equal reserve.

D. M. GARMAN.

MODERN POETRY. By H. P. COLLINS. Jonathan Cape, 6s.

Whatever discussions are forgivable upon the great dead, the middling dead or the lately dead, rigidly composed and indifferent to any coloured light you glance over them, it is only fair that a writer, choosing for himself a subject so large and moving as the production of modern poets, should first of all set out as plainly as he can the method he intends to use and the object toward which he reaches. Now, at the outset, Mr. Collins had meant to refuse his reader even this grace:

"It was not my intention, in approaching the study of modern poetry," he writes, in the rather bumping pomp of diction peculiar to his style, "to formulate any theory of æsthetic, but rather to let what views of criticism lay at the back of my opinions emerge in a way that would not obtrude upon direct critical discussion." I cannot understand how he hoped to initiate or carry on a discussion, thus keeping his standards in purdah. He reflects, however, that "it is merely deceptive to try to give the impression that one's criticism is—what I have said it never can be—impersonal," and after making a quick, obligatory genuflexion before Signor Croce, he declares himself "now launched upon a confession of faith."

I slept and had a dream; the University of Oxford, it seemed to me, had decided to include modern English poetry as a subsidiary subject in the school of Greats. I appeared to myself correcting the first batch of papers that this innovation had brought forth. Mr. Collins' papers lay upon the top, and his answers were such, in every way, as I had looked forward to in advocating the change. I watched his scholastic caracole before me. "I think that true criticism is philosophical, since it must spring from a fruitful sense of values. These values are not originally artistic; they derive from other experience, perhaps chiefly moral." I queried this, I think, and promised myself to refer to it in his *viva voce* examination. I read further on that "literature always deals *au fond* with humanity." I scored the passage with as sharp and emphatic a mark of approval as if my stroke were the execution of a heresy.

In the extreme, Mr. Collins' review of modern poetry is academic. It excludes the work, for instance, of Sacheverell and Edith Sitwell, of Robert Graves, and of T. S. Eliot, and devotes almost fifty pages to the unimportant, archaistic exercises of H. D. It is academic, in that it continually attempts and always fails to achieve a defini-

tion. It is characteristic of a Greats type of intelligence to be, at the same time, as strained and vague as this: "Mr. Doughty is in the front rank of our day, and he has very deliberately turned his back on our day. He writes not only from the impulse, but in the medium of a great period of our language; a period that survives in literature mainly by Spenser and Chaucer, and somehow embraces them both." And the same intelligence will let slip into its work passages of unexampled meretriciousness: "The Celtic spirit was something to us entirely fresh; nourished centuries ago in the primitive legend and superstition of a dreaming peasantry, softened and encircled in the aura of the most romantic of all lands."

PETER QUENNELL.

ENGLISH SATIRE AND SATIRISTS. By PROF. H. WALKER, M.A., LL.D., D.LITT. Dent, 7s. 6d.

This brief but detailed history of satire is a work which has been so long needed that one is tempted to overlook its considerable limitations. But this would be to ignore the peculiar significance for our times of many of the questions raised by Prof. Walker. First, then, a word of gratitude for the lucid and compact manner in which he has presented his material. His principle of selection is necessarily flexible, and embraces almost everything of interest that can be called satiric. There is no perdurable form for satire in English literature: Wyatt's attempt to establish the *terza rima* for that purpose was no more influential than Gascoigne's choice of blank verse, and if Spenser's use of the five-beat iambic couplet in "Mother Hubberd's Tale" foreshadows the long Augustan domination, it is Chaucer that made the prophetic application a possibility. The developments of the satiric approach are no more progressive than the history of its forms. Direct irony is unknown in the early heroic fragments; it flourishes in sudden complexity in Chaucer, becomes almost inaudible amid the more open-mouthed tones of Skelton and his successors, until, famine and religion, those most urgent of promptors, yielding to the expansion of trade and empire, it attains a fresh sophistication in Dekker's "Gull's Hornbook." These withering instructions for the education of a gallant are, if we are allow for the milder purpose of Dekker, a perfect technical anticipation of Swift's "Advice to Servants." Satire is a mood, and its stimulations are generally more traceable than those of other forms of expression. It reflected faithfully the rawness of the period between Chaucer and the Reformation, with a raw indignation which can seldom afford the luxury of detachment and the more devilish revenges of *ennui*. The greater material abundance of Elizabethan times freed the satiric mind from its bare necessitious reaction, and by

encouraging the formal expression of such private quarrels as those between Harvey and Greene-and-Nash, Jonson and Marston-and-Dekker, prepared the form for its triumph in the early 18th century as an integral part of the literature of contemplation.

Professor Walker denies it such a status, and his commentary on satirists is accordingly embarrassed: the greater the satirist the more grudging is his commendation; he reproves Pope and Byron in terms that more than neutralise his praise of them, and his abhorrence for the temperament of Swift drives him into a really childish eulogy of Steele—a comparison that Steele cannot sustain for two minutes. His particular judgments cannot be gone into here (he ignores Mandeville, gives only a line to Prior, and makes no mention of Praed or A. H. Clough). But his general attitude rests on a dogma very common in our age, which needs to be challenged.

> "Every form of literature is valued ultimately in proportion to the truth it embodies. Now romance embodies a deeper truth than realism—as the realists understand it. There is something of the Yahoo in humanity, but there is also something which responds to the 'Serious Call.' Law and Wesley and Whitfield pierce nearer to the root of the matter than Swift with all his superb intellectual strength. . . . Satire is a relatively low form of literature, just because it embodies a relatively small element of truth."

The inability of non-poetic thought to settle new delimitations has left literature free to wander the whole field of experience, subject only to its own conventions, those of language. But literature has throughout refused one of the three attitudes possible in prose thought; and of the other two the position of the extreme satirist, such as Swift, is on an absolute equality, in this antonomous state, with all the variations of a more usual dualism.

BERTRAM HIGGINS.

EARLY POEMS AND STORIES. By W. B. YEATS. Macmillan, 10s. 6d.

Mr. Yeat's development, as we can see it now, has been unequivocal and persistent—a fact which increases the interest of his early work. This volume contains his verse and prose published before the beginning of the century. Of the two it is the prose that "dates," as being the more polemical expression of an attitude since abandoned. Or, to put the matter differentiy, Mr. Yeats's later poetry shows few traces of a mythical structure which he has found to be inadequate for his thought and archaic in its effect on his style. "The Wanderings of Usheen" (1889) is in many ways comparable to "Endymion." Both are ambitious attempts by young poets to test their powers on great subjects; both are,

in result, personal expansions which leave the legends as they were without, as Keats feared, "sullying" them. Keats's failure, however, was due to the energy of his romantic imagination disregarding the heroic essentials of his subject. Mr. Yeats's Fenians, inferior dramatic figures, allow his poem its effects of completeness, while they confirm its narrow range of feeling. He realised himself what had happened immediately afterwards. In "Crossways," published in the same year as "Usheen," the first poem, a lamentation for the old æsthetic, is also a pointed enunciation of a new one.

> "The woods of Arcady are dead,
> And over is their antique joy;
> Of old the world on dreaming fed;
> Grey Truth is now her painted toy . .
> Words alone are certain good."

This period lasted till about ten years ago, and covers some of Mr. Yeats's most delicate lyrics. Failing to find a structure for them he seems to have concentrated, with distinguished success, on linking them by an idiosyncratic cast of imagery—an essentially individual achievement which was unhappily commandeered by the national literary movement. His confession of dissatisfaction with the work of those years reveals the principle of its growth:

> "I tried after the publication of the "Wanderings of Usheen" to write of nothing but emotion, and in the simplest language, and now I have had to go through it all, cutting out or altering passages that are sentimental from lack of thought."

In the light of such self-criticism his recent work, with its tart realism and terseness, is likely to lead on to new springs of vitality.

B. H.

NABOTH'S VINEYARD: A Stage Piece. By Clemence Dane. Heinemann, 6s.

It is disarming of Miss Clemence Dane to call *Naboth's Vineyard* a "Stage Piece," because, after all, some of the greatest stage-triumphs recorded have been secured by individual actors and even whole companies in plays which, printed, will not bear serious criticism: whereas there are great imaginative plays like *The Tempest*, which unless with introduction of novelties like the Dance of Chinamen that delighted Pepys, have always hitherto resisted successful stage-interpretation. It may be that *Naboth's Vineyard* will be a great stage-success: Miss Dane "got away" all right with *Will Shakespeare*, which suffered from much the same faults as the present play. *Will Shakespeare* was a triumph of anachronism: there was, if I remember, an impossible love-conflict between Shakespeare and Marlow, and as a gay young man just setting out

from Stratford the Bard sang Ann Hathaway a song from the *Tempest* in which all the mature sufferings of the new century are implicit. In *Naboth's Vineyard* similarly the events of seventeen years and three reigns are telescoped into about a fortnight's action; the characters of the principals, even allowing for the anti-foreign bias of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, are altered—Ahab, for instance, appears as a besotted weakling and is given no credit for the fine defeat of Ben-Hadad, which is expressly attributed in *Kings* to his personal strategy—and there is a silly love-affair between Jehu and the unbelievably well-preserved Jezebel: the account of their first meeting at a marriage-by-proxy in Sidon violates a score of cultural conventions.

Now, the licence for literary anachronism and false-characterisation is rightly a lavish one, but is only permitted in genuine cases, that is, in the cases where the original history is not readily remembered by the audience or has no claim to be respected as serious history at all. Thus Job or Jonah, who are in the first place allegorical figures and no more, become legitinate themes for embroidery, and Noah, as in the Guild Miracle Plays, comically arguing with his wife about admitting the mother-in-law into the Ark or restraining a mob of impetuous cheeses from rushing the gang-way—he's all very well. A dramatic Russian Scandal, such as evolved the Cressida of Dares the Phrygian, Chaucer, Henryson and Shakespeare from the shadowy Briseis of the *Iliad*, is often delightful. One takes the bare bones of the well-known story and puts flesh on them. But it is dangerous to tamper with the bones themselves, even where there is a GREAT IDEA behind the drama, which is certainly not the case here.

In style there is dreadful wobbling between the Biblical :—

THE BEGGAR: "Not so. For the Lord said unto Ahab—'surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and I will requite thee in the vineyard.'

JEHU: "Even so. Cast out the body of Ahab's son into the vineyard that was Naboth's.

THE BEGGAR: "For him that dieth of Ahab in the city shall the dogs eat, etc."

and the pseudo-Shakesperean

"THE COURTIER: Sir, there are as yet no foreigners in the street, no vendors of ambergris, no workers in gold, no merchants in shawls and carpets . . . above all, no beggars in rags, no beggars in silks, no petitioners, no eunuchs, no neophytes, no priests. Scarce a supple lord or a fat rogue is to be seen, let alone a lean honest man. Therefrom may we deduce . . .

and the undistinguished

EDEN: "And that is why we coax the King of Judah here.

AMON: "We? What have we poor Israelites to do with Jezebel's policy?

EDEN : " Still I say ' we.' The queen sees no further than the honour of the marriage. . ."

No, I don't think it will do, even as a stage-piece.

ROBERT GRAVES.

MOCKERY GAP. By T. F. POWYS. Chatto & Windus. 7s. net.

Mr. Powys appears to be allowing his resentment at the conventional falsification of rustic life in fiction to distort his work. A result of his honourable, though inartistic, impulse to be true to facts instead of being content to be true to his imaginative comprehension of them, is the introduction of much material alien to his idiom. It is true that the incidents in this book are interconnected so thoroughly that the omission of one would affect all the others, but the " wiring " is ingenious rather than inevitable. For instance, the Prings and the Pottles, who do quarrel, are superfluous. Admittedly, in any realistic account of Mockery, they must have figured. To the idiom of Mr. Powys' symbolically distorted rendering, however, they are foreign. Nevertheless, it is a highly dramatic instant when they momentarily abandon their feud in order to discuss (Mr. Pattimore an involuntary eavesdropper) strange events, including Mrs. Pattimore's conduct, that are directly attributable to the fisherman's influence, and one that illustrates Mr. Powys' knack of unexpectedly finding strength in his weakness—to which this book owes much of its odd significance.

Mr. Powys belongs to the rare class of novelists whose work has poetic value, though it must be admitted that, even when the disturbing elements mentioned are absent, his imagination is not consistently capable of assimilating and transforming into art the heterogeneous materials necessary to the scheme of his book, which is, briefly, to give an account of the events at Mockery during one rather abnormal summer.

Much of his failure is due to the crude naivety of his symbolism, which has a sentimental origin in a desire to emphasise the universal significance of his persons. He speaks of an early map of the world, " drawn in the fine fancy of those early times, when the earth was excitingly alive with monsters and devils, that were outside instead of inside folks' minds as they are to-day." Mr. Powys' own method is analogous to that of those early cartographers, and by it he achieves the same falsity to facts and occasional truth to imaginative reality as they did. The inhabitants of Mockery are never " persons," but they do live. When Mr. Powys is content to realise their life the result is æsthetically moving. When, on the contrary, he deliberately attempts to import moral significance into his work, to make his people " stand for " something, he is often trivial and dull.

Possibly Mr. Powys' proper medium is the short story. None of the tales that are so carefully interwoven really gains by the process,

of which the only advantage is that it saves Mr. Powys trouble by enabling him to run right through the book the symbolic figures of Mr. Tan and the fisherman, who so disturb the peace of Mockery. But a little extra labour spent in humanizing these symbols would have raised the general level of interest nearer that of its excellent incidents. And a little extra attention to the writing, for Mr. Powys passes some extremely slipshod and ungrammatical sentences, would have removed an unnecessray blemish from a prose which is distinctly personal.

C. H. RICKWORD.

LITTLE NOVELS OF SICILY. By GIOVANNI VERGA. Translated by D. H. LAWRENCE. Blackwell. 6s.

It is interesting to see the new wine of Mr. Lawrence's style and spirit poured into the old, or at all events highly traditional, vessel of Verga's art. Verga, as we learn from the translator's concise and illuminating preface, began his literary career as a novelist of manners and "elegance"; it was later that he turned to studies of Sicilian peasant life. One great virtue of Mr. Lawrence's translation is the peculiar stamp and character it gives to the dialogue of the peasants—a turn of speech that subtly suggests oppression, rebelliousness and want of education. One may dislike the flavour and wonder whether Mr. Lawrence is right to father upon a Latin agricultural population an idiom related to the dialect of industrial England; but the gain in vividness outweighs a certain loss in dignity and simplicity.

The stories do not lend themselves easily to analysis. Verga sees his characters through a telescope rather than through a microscope; the question, with him, is to make them as large as life, not to make them larger. Neither in the peasants who are oppressed nor in the local baron or village priest who cheats and otherwise misuses them is there much evidence of mixed motives; the measure of happiness is in accordance with the power of the characters to attain their ends. A Teutonic writer might portray "His Reverence" as consumed with secret fears for the final issue of his criminal acquisitiveness, as haunted by the memory of his theft. But no such qualms assail Verga's priest: he is, to put it simply, unhappy if thwarted, happy if he gets his own way. And the peasants, because their livelihood is insecure, because they are a prey to malaria, and because the hand of the gentry is heavy upon them, are unhappy. We are not invited to inspect their hovels and see, in the cleanliness and order there displayed, how thrift can triumph over circumstances and how a clear conscience is worth more than riches. In his attitude towards life Verga is content to accept a fairly close correspondence between outward prosperity and inward happiness. It is nice to be rich and nasty to be poor. Yet he is an idealist, not a cynic, and his stories, with their bright

lights and dark shadows, gain lucidity and sureness from not being twisted to fit a sceptical or paradoxical conception of human relationships. We may feel doubtful whether so black a character as "His Reverence" ever existed; doubtful whether in Sicily or elsewhere law is generally administered under the auspices of the powerful to the injury of the weak. But we can agree with Verga that such characters and such conditions are, or would be, lamentable; and in art it is clearly more important that a writer should have a coherent and recognisable code of emotional values than that he should have a new one.

If the original is as good as the translation, Verga's prose must often be lovely.

L. P. HARTLEY.

Among New Books

NO MORE PARADES. By F. M. FORD. Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

The setting of this novel is a huge base-camp during the war. The protagonist, Tietjens of Groby, a Tory landowner, serving as a captain in command of drafts, has qualities which would have fitted him for much more important posts, but is foiled by the exigency of his nature which repeatedly brings him to loggerheads with his commanding officers, his wife, and the world in general. The setting is written skilfully and with animation. The subordinate characters, generals, sergeant-majors, orderlies, staff-colonels and privates, and their various re-actions to the drudgery of warfare make a convincing framework to sustain the development of the principal character. But Tietjens only lives in patches. The conditions which determine his individuality are not inherent in the story but are drawn arbitrarily from his past by the rather shallow devices of letters and introspective reminiscence. When Sylvia, his wife, arrives from England without papers she appears also without psychological authorisation. The motives for her behaviour towards Tietjens, which is the chief cause of his misfortunes, are introduced from a past with which this story has no real connection so that the integrity of his heroism is impaired by the shadowy nature of his opponent. She has no more vitality than the stock aristocratic she-villain whose exotic passion finds pleasure in alternately wounding and alluring its object. Her tinsel unreality affects the substantialness of Tietjens, and at times he degenerates into the impassive sheik lover of popular romance. But though Mr. Ford's powers do not carry off the melodrama which he unnecessarily introduces, they enable him to give a convincing picture of warfare seen from the base. There is, perhaps, a too frequent suggestion of high-handed intrigue on the part of politicians and jealous commanders, but the episodes concerned with the life of a base-camp, its pettiness and confusion and unseeing effort, are so intimately described as to give an impression of the unrelenting force of war that has its own value.

A BOOK OF MODERN VERSE. Chosen by J. C. SMITH. Oxford University Press. 2s. 6d.

The compiler of this very bad anthology thinks that though the anthologist of 1825 would have given first place to Byron and the second to Scott, ignoring Shelley and Keats, and hesitating a little over Wordsworth, his counterpart

of 1925 can scarcely go so far astray. If it were possible, Mr. Smith, who has been compelled by consideration of length, difficulty and *subject matter*, to omit some poems that on their poetic merits he would have gladly included, would err even more conventionally. The book, despite the "Modern" in the title, is in effect nothing more than a supplement to the "Oxford Book of Victorian Verse." Of the problems proposed to the poet by modern civilisation, of the new attitude to destiny necessitated by the researches of psycho-analysts, there is no hint. In fact, few modern, that is, post-war, poets are here represented at all. Mr. Yeats has one poem in his early manner; Mr. Masefield might never have emerged from the mists of the Celtic Renaissance, nor Mr. Sassoon have written a satire. Even such a legitimate Victorian as Mr. Hardy is represented by three easy and gay poems, quite uncharacteristic of his best work.

Since the compiler thinks it necessary to explain in a foot-note that *orts* means *scraps*, the anthology may be intended for the nursery, but there is no hint in the preface of such an intention.

FROM HENRY V TO HAMLET. By HARLEY GRANVILLE-BARKER. Humphrey Milford. 1s.

This pamphlet, which contains the Annual Shakespeare Lecture delivered in 1925 to the British Academy, considers the question of the production of the great tragedies from a practical point of view. *Henry V* is looked upon as the culminating point in the development of the dramatic tradition which Shakespeare inherited. It has the spectacular quality and affords the opportunity for the popular actor which were demanded by the Elizabethan audience, but already there are signs, in the prologues, of Shakespeare's discontent. The playwright was dissatisfied with the practical man of affairs as his hero, and so after writing the three comedies, *As You Like It, Much Ado* and *What You Will*, he returns to tragedy with Brutus as hero, for now his "care is not what his hero does but what he *is*." In *Hamlet* his concern is the same, and his purpose is admirably served here by a principle character who, naturally histrionic, can make full use of the soliloquy without loss of dramatic force. In the later plays, and this is one of Mr. Granville-Barker's most interesting points, the part of the introspective hero (so likely to outbalance the play) is distributed, and Iago, himself so complete a character, is a "device for letting us learn the inwardness of Othello."

The conclusion which Mr. Granville-Barker draws from these brief but striking glances at the later plays is that "in finding in the working out of *Hamlet* the technique best suited to his genius, Shakespeare the playwright took the wrong road." But although he doubtless imagined effects which never were fully achieved in his theatre, it may be supposed that such effects *may* be realised, since Shakespeare was firstly a playwright and himself an actor.

ENGLISH OF TO-DAY. By PROFESSOR W. T. WEBB. Routledge. 3s. 6d.

The theoretical portions of this little book are brief and lucid; but its main interest lies in the varied and audacious lists of examples with which the author illustrates his points. It would appear that most of the notable writers of the day have, at one time or another, committed schoolboy howlers. Professor Webb's tactics are not the pedant bully's; his richest booty is got, not from such a journal as the "*Pink 'Un*" (whose plentiful use of idiom would perhaps disarm, or embarrass, the grammarian) but from the pompous communal style of the *Times Literary Supplement*. His judgment is sympathetic to the flexible constitution of language, in which the laws of literary tradition are being continuously qualified by the executive of contemporary speech. In so far as such studies have an applied, and not merely an educational value, it is due to the quality which makes Professor Webb's choice and arrangement of instances more conclusive than his definitions.